

Suspect ship held on Teesside

Customs stop '140-ton gun' bound for Iraq

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent, and Christopher Walker

CUSTOMS officers yesterday discovered what they believe to be a 140-ton gun capable of firing nuclear or chemical shells hundreds of miles, packaged in separate boxes on board a merchant ship bound for Iraq.

It was the third time in two weeks that Customs had taken action to prevent consignments being exported to Iraq.

Employees of two British firms interviewed in connection with the consignment say they were parts for oil pumping equipment, but Customs officials who detained the ship at Teesport pending examination of the material, are convinced the boxes contained parts for a gun with a 40-metre long barrel.

"You don't have oil pumping equipment that is tapered at one end," one source said. "If the expert confirms that the boxes contained parts for a gun, it would prove a new evidence that Iraq was trying to acquire special delivery systems for launching chemical shells and, potentially, nuclear warheads over large distances. A cannon that size could fire a one-metre shell weighing about two tons as far as Tel Aviv or Tehran."

Defence experts confirmed yesterday that a gun of such a calibre could fire both nuclear and chemical shells.

The boxes were discovered on board the Bermuda-registered MV Gur Mariner, on charter to the Iraqi Maritime

Organization. It had been due to sail from Teesport, where it had been docked for a week, having arrived from Rotterdam.

Yesterday's operation, codenamed Bertha, came after the seizure of 40 nuclear trigger devices at Heathrow airport on March 28, and the investigation the following day of the export of naval equipment — thought to be devices for atomic mines — to Iraq. Both involved Mr Omar Latif, a senior Iraqi Airways employee, known to be the head of Iraqi intelligence in London. He was deported.

Yesterday's operation was unconnected with Mr Latif's activities. But since the discovery of the nuclear trigger devices, Customs have been keeping a close watch on all exports to Iraq.

The Customs operation was named after the Big Bertha gun, developed in the First World War. Experts said last night that guns of that size were not being built anywhere in the world. "It's certainly the biggest gun we have uncovered in this country," one Customs source said.

"It seems to be a one-off weapon. Experts are still trying to identify its source, but we have raided offices in Sheffield and Halesowen for documents relating to its manufacture."

Arrests may follow, although one man wanted for questioning is returning from abroad.

Constantine Brantford of Middlesbrough, agent for the vessel, would not comment, and the Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority said it had been asked to say nothing.

If the parts prove to be a gun, it will further heighten tensions in the Middle East, already described by many observers as at their highest level since the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

It will also seriously effect Anglo-Iraqi relations which have been at a low ebb since the hanging of Mr Farzad Bazoft, the London-based Iranian journalist, although President Saddam Hussein of Iraq has shrugged off the previous discoveries as Western attempts to distort innocent commercial activity to blacken his image.

The Iraqis have won considerable sympathy from fellow Arab states for their claims that recent Western accusations against them have only one aim: to set up the climate for a second pre-emptive Israeli strike similar to that launched against Iraqi Osirak nuclear reactor in 1981.

The 22 members of the Arab League have already met in emergency session and given full backing to Iraq to the extent of claiming that any attack on one member will be considered an attack on all. The director of the League's military affairs department, Mr Hassan Al-Bassam, has urged all member states to step up their production of advanced weaponry.

Operation Bertha came on the eve of a key meeting between the Iraqi president and a five-member delegation from the US Senate scheduled to take place in Baghdad today in an effort to diffuse the war of words between Iraq and the West.

Diplomatic observers said the uncovering of further evidence of Iraq's military ambitions in the chemicals and possibly also the nuclear weapons fields would cast a shadow over the meeting, organized at the last minute by President Mubarak of Egypt, acting as a peacemaker.

Diplomats in the Middle East said the latest operation would increase complaints in the Arab world of what they allege are double standards in the West.

Countries such as Britain and America are accused of pulling out all stops to prevent the Arabs acquiring advanced weapons technology while doing little or nothing to hold back Israel, now estimated to have an arsenal of between 100 and 200 nuclear warheads.

Mr Henry Dodds, a military expert of *Jane's Defence Weekly*, said that the Americans tested a huge gun 20 years ago which could fire 600lb shells over a range of 1,100 miles and reaching a height of 180 miles.

Home Office veto new police chief

By Craig Seton

THE Home Office yesterday took the unprecedented step of rejecting a police authority's choice of a new chief constable. Mr John Wesely, who was appointed Chief Constable of Derbyshire on Monday, was told yesterday that he was not acceptable for the post.

Mr Wesely, aged 52, was Derbyshire's deputy chief constable and had been acting head of the force since February. The Labour-controlled police authority stated yesterday that it would stand by his appointment as chief constable, which was made in defiance of the Home Office's refusal to approve his inclusion on an original shortlist.

The Home Office's veto showed signs yesterday of developing into a political dispute with the police authority which is regarded in Government circles as left-wing. The authority said it would seek an urgent meeting with Mr David Waddington, the Home Secretary, to demand why Mr Wesely's appointment had been rejected.

Police sources suggested yesterday that the rejection of Mr Wesely was an attempt by the Home Office to exert its authority over the Labour-controlled authority. A Home Office spokesman said yesterday that it had received Derbyshire's notification of Mr Wesely's appointment and had responded by letter. A reply was awaited.

Mr Eric Swain, chairman of the Derbyshire police authority, said: "It is a very unusual situation and I am very disappointed but if our decision was right on Monday then it is right today."

Mr Chris Patten was on the council election trail in the South London borough of Lambeth — and out of luck. The local Tories had selected four flats on the Cedar Road council estate for him to "knock up" for the television cameras. Two had recently been bought by the occupiers; the tenants in the other two were making plans to buy.

It all seemed safe enough. The minister, surrounded by a rapidly enlarging press corps, had confidently knocked on No. 290. The television crews had aimed their cameras and prepared to give Mr or

Mrs Householder their 30 seconds of fame. Nothing. Mr Patten looked at his shoes. The photographers stood ready. The net curtains twitched not a whisker.

The story was repeated at each of the other flats in turn. Then a window opened opposite Mr Patten's ensemble and a man peered down. "Has she won the pools?" he demanded in excitement. The cameras swung up to record what was the high point of the campaign so far.

"No. We are Conservatives," a hopeful high-pitched female Tory voice replied. The man looked aghast and backed away from his window.

On the Richter scale of political impact, Mr Patten's election walkabout simply did not register. The local milkman probably stirs more activity in the Cedar Road council estate than he managed. But his

morning excursion, his first in the campaign, had begun promisingly enough with a photo-opportunity on the borders of Labour-controlled Lambeth and Conservative-controlled Wandsworth, where he described Robertson Street as the "great divide" — on the Labour side the community charge is £14 a week more than on the Tory side.

"I am not being provocative," Mr Patten grandly declared to a street empty of voters. "I am demonstrating that Labour councils cost you a lot more than Conservative areas where you also get better services for less money."

The council estate was in Lambeth but there was not a riot, or potential riot, in sight. Instead, some hundred yards up the road a moth-eaten cat sauntered across the "great divide" heading towards the more expensive

poll tax. So, standing in the road, by a couple of forlorn "Flat for Sale" signs, a rather desolate minister made do with being interviewed for the radio.

Opposite stood the board for "Sacred Heart Houses: A registered charity for aid to missionaries". If ever a Conservative missionary needed succour, Mr Patten was he.

Would he have better luck in Trafalgar Square, the next port of call? A party of Spanish teenagers and several American tourists looked on at a strange British ritual: a Cabinet minister cleaning the square with a state-of-the-art mechanized road-sweeper. "What wonderful machines," Mr Patten said as he drove at the photographers, adding with a shout: "We have lift off!"

Which was more than could be said for the local council election campaign.



A loyalist protests outside the Europa Hotel, Belfast, during Mr Haughey's visit yesterday

Haughey call for economic unity

By Edward Gorman
Irish Affairs Correspondent

MR CHARLES Haughey, the Irish Prime Minister, made a dramatic first official visit to Belfast in more than 25 years yesterday where he delivered an eloquent call for Irish economic unity before returning to Dublin unscathed.

Mr Haughey's much publicised visit in his capacity as President of the European Council of Ministers, was conducted amid intense security. There had been fears of big "loyalist" demonstrations and possibly violence, but in the event only 200 to 300 people responded to the call from The Rev Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionists.

When Mr Haughey's bullet-proof car swept into the Europa Hotel in the city centre at about 11 am, Mr Paisley led the protest from a rooftop nearby hurling political insults and abuse at his supporters, including skinheads and pensioners, screaming from behind police barricades. During his four-hour stay Mr Haughey revealed that he had been travelling to Northern Ireland regularly over the years on private visits to relations. "I haven't been away from Belfast as long as the official position might indicate," he said.

The visit came as two of the four Ulster Defence Regiment soldiers killed by an IRA landmine on Monday in Downpatrick, county Down, were buried, and as police said four people were being questioned in connection with the attack.

In addition to his key note speech to an Institute of Directors' conference, Mr Haughey also took the opportunity to try to calm Unionist and British Government anger over recent decisions on extradition by the Irish Supreme Court.

He said his government and the British Government were doing all they could to combat terrorism and added that he believed there would be no further problems with extradition from the British point of view because Ireland was now operating under European legislation on the suppression of terrorism which made extradition for terrorist crime automatic.

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Minister orders more jail staff and riot gear

By Quentin Cowdry, Home Affairs Correspondent

THE Government announced yesterday emergency measures to restore order in the troubled penal system as a prison officer at a Scottish jail escaped from inmates who had held him hostage for 20 hours.

About 200 extra prison officers are to be immediately drafted into jails in England and Wales and stocks of riot equipment, including shields, helmets and protective clothing, are to be increased.

The Home Office is also to set up a "steering group" of senior officials to co-ordinate the difficult and urgent task of finding new accommodation for inmates displaced from riot-affected prisons.

The hostage incident at Shotts Prison, near Glasgow, ended dramatically when the captive officer, Mr Jim Rankin, aged 30, broke free from inmates and leapt from a second floor window.

Ministers have, for the time being, rejected demands by the Prison Officers' Association for a sharp increase in staffing in jails.

Mr David Waddington, the Home Secretary, said any "fresh assessment" of manning levels would have to await the conclusion of Lord Justice Woolf's inquiry into the Strangeways riot. However, he added: "Recognizing the stress that the prison

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Fashion chains suffer losses

HIGH Street gloom intensified yesterday with news of a slump in profits at two fashion chains.

The Rack revealed that profits slumped from £3.12 million to £1.32 million while clothing retailer French Connection said that losses for 1989/90 have grown from £990,000 to £4.67 million.

Like most High Street shops they are being hit by rising interest rates and shoppers with less money to spend.

Mr Roy Bishko, The Rack chairman, said he expected

that "the difficult economic climate" to persist. Mr Michael Shen, French Connection chief executive, said: "Customers are buying less."

The bad news comes in the wake of a £46.7 million pre-tax loss suffered by the Next retail chain, which is cutting 2,000 jobs.

One bright spot in the retailing sector was Tesco, proving that while shoppers are cutting back on clothes they are still filling their supermarket trollies.

The supermarket giant revealed profits before tax 31 per cent higher at £361.6 million with health conscious customers buying more fresh fruit and vegetables.

Sir Ian MacLaurin, the chairman, was optimistic about 1990. "There's no sign people are cutting down on what they are eating and drinking," he said. "Sales since the year end have continued to be very strong."

Tesco's £362m profits, page 23
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Comment, page 25

New Hong Kong passports hint

By Jonathan Brande and Richard Ford

ANOTHER 300 Hong Kong families could be granted British passports on top of the 50,000 covered in the Nationality Bill, it was suggested yesterday.

The scheme, to give employees of British companies based in Hong Kong preferential treatment, is under active consideration, Mr Francis Maude, the Minister of State at the Foreign Office said.

The companies would be allowed to second senior workers to Britain to help them to fulfil residency requirements for full UK pass-

ports. The Foreign Office said yesterday: "We are talking about a very, very limited scheme. We are talking about 200 or 300 heads of household. We don't know how it will pan out. We are simply looking at the possibility of such a scheme."

The spokesman denied there was any contradiction between Mr Maude's comments and those of Mr Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, who said last week that those helped by a special

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Truth about jail staffing obscured by layers of statistics

By Quentin Cowdry
Home Affairs Correspondent

THE truth about whether prisons are under-staffed is obscured by a layer of claim and counter-claim by vested interests.

The Home Office, with apparent persuasiveness, claims that prison officer numbers have risen by 46 per cent since 1979, while the jail population in England and Wales has increased by only 11 per cent.

What it fails to point out, however, is that the time staff have to spend ferrying inmates to and from courts has increased sharply over the same period.

Since 1979, in fact, custodial demands have leapt by almost 75

per cent to more than 10,600 inmates. A big rise in the number of imprisoned sex offenders has also imposed extra burdens.

Prison officers, too, are not slow to exaggerate their case. The jail riots have presented them with a prize opportunity to argue for more staff in spite of the evidence that at least some staff could work more flexibly.

Fresh Start, the pay and conditions deal reached between the Home Office and the Prison Officers' Association in May 1987 provides the starting point for any understanding of the issues.

The aim was ambitious: to replace a costly, even corrupt,

"overtime-driven" working system with one that was more efficient, offering bigger rewards in all senses to staff and improved regimes for inmates.

Previously, officers worked an average 56-hour week, including 16 hours' overtime. There was, however, widespread acceptance that up to 20 per cent of the hours were being worked unnecessarily — the result of inflexible rosters.

Under Fresh Start, officers went on to an average 48-hour week, comprising a new basic 39-hour week with nine "contracted" additional hours, the latter to be reduced to zero over five years.

In return, management in-

creased pay and promised to make up in extra manpower half the number of contracted hours lost. So far, about 1,150 officers have been recruited under this arrangement. At the end of last month there were 20,663 officers.

However, prison officers argue that management has failed to honour its promise on staffing and has also failed to provide sufficient cover at the half dozen or so new prisons opened since 1987.

The result, it says, has been inmates having to be locked in cells for even longer periods, thereby increasing tension.

● The prison population, after falling slightly over the past year, is

expected to increase by up to 14,000 by 1998 to 62,000 as more criminals are prosecuted, the Home Office said yesterday.

Most of the expansion will come from an increase of about 9,000 adult male offenders convicted of serious offences.

The number of women in jail will remain unchanged while the population of convicted young male offenders will rise by about 500.

The Home Office's latest population estimates are down on previous ones. This is believed to reflect its increased confidence that courts will, in line with government policy, imprison fewer less

serious offenders. The prison population is continuing to fall as fewer people are remanded in custody and courts increasingly use non-custodial penalties when dealing with young criminals.

On April 6, the figure stood at 47,029 — 2,200 lower than on the same day last year, the Home Office said.

Penal reformers said the Government's admission that prisoner numbers would soon be increasing again showed that it had been talking with a "forked tongue" since February when it published a White Paper proposing a fundamental shift in sentencing policy away from custody.

Petrol set to fall back below £2

PETROL prices are set to drift below £2 a gallon as oil companies react to falling costs on the Rotterdam spot market (Kevin Eason writes).

Prices fell by \$16 (about £10) a ton yesterday, the equivalent of a 3p cut at the pumps if oil companies follow through the price falls.

Although the main oil companies said they would want a period of stability before making a decision to order price cuts at more than 20,000 forecourts in Britain, prices were already falling throughout the country.

The standard price of 205p for four-star leaded ordered at the end of March has already drifted down to 203p.

50 to opt out

At least 50 hospitals are expected to opt out of health authority control next April when NHS reforms are implemented, Mr Duncan Nichol, chief executive, said yesterday after a meeting with health service managers. There were 180 expressions of interest when the proposal was made.

TV props stolen

Antiques worth £85,000 used in television period dramas, including a £27,000 silver cutlery set, have been stolen from a props warehouse near Peckham, the BBC's Birmingham broadcasting centre. The stolen property would have filled a large furniture van.

Master cleared

Mr Bill Fewings, Master of the Quincey Shagbushes, was found not guilty by magistrates at Taunton, Somerset, yesterday of three offences relating to killing a stag. The prosecution was brought by Mr John Hicks, secretary manager of the League Against Cruel Sports.

Anand leads

After four rounds, Viswanathan Anand, of India, leads the Grandmaster tournament in Prestwich with 3.5 points. In second place with three points is Michael Adams, the British champion. The three Russian representatives lost their games, two of them against British players.

Hostage leaps out of prison window to escape inmates

By Kerry Gill

THE prison officer held hostage for 20 hours by 40 inmates at Shotts Prison near Glasgow made a dramatic escape last night when he jumped from a second storey window.

Mr Jim Rankin, aged 30, who was seized by prisoners and held in the prison's B hall on Tuesday night, escaped during negotiations led by Mr Peter Abernethy, the prison governor.

A spokesman for the Scottish Office said that Mr Rankin was undergoing a

medical check although there was little cause for concern.

Prisoners remaining in B hall were transferred to other accommodation at Shotts. Mr Rankin was held when violence broke out as inmates were returning to their cells on Tuesday night.

Two other officers were injured, one of them believed stabbed, in the ensuing brawl.

Both officers, Mr Tom Costello, aged 33, and Mr William Taggart, aged 42, were taken to Law Hospital. Mr Costello was said to be in a stable

condition last night and his colleague was described as comfortable with minor head injuries.

The inmates took control of part of the hall's second floor and the whole of the third floor, but did reach the roof. The jail was opened as a model prison costing £15 million in June, 1987.

Mr Rankin reassured negotiators early in "the siege" that he was unhurt.

Throughout the day scores of police, some of them using tracker dogs, sealed off the prison, which is less than a mile south of Shotts village in Lanarkshire.

The trouble at Shotts appears to have taken the authorities by surprise.

Although the prison has the latest facilities, it suffered a hostage-taking three months after it opened.

Over the past two years there has been a series of minor incidents at the jail, which at present holds 434 prisoners but has a capacity for 468. Yesterday it became plain that its atmosphere has been tense virtually since it opened.

In January Mr Tom Byers, the Inspector of Prisons in Scotland, said that some cell blocks at Shotts were in peril of becoming "no-go" areas, with inmates locked in their cells and having little contact with fellow prisoners.

Peace policy defended

By Ronald Faux

MR Brendan O'Friel, governor of Strangeways prison, Manchester, yesterday defended his efforts to end the occupation by rioters — now in its 12th day — by peaceful negotiation.

As three more prisoners surrendered yesterday Mr O'Friel described the growing demand for tougher, direct action to end the siege as "simplistic".

He said the policy of unrelenting negotiations coupled with "other measures" to put pressure on the rioters had yielded good results with fewer than 15 inmates holding out.

The Home Office supported

his approach and to give a peaceable solution overwhelming priority. "I can say we have had an improvement in the amount of dialogue going on between negotiating teams of prison officers and the remaining prisoners," he said. "I am very pleased with the team of prison service staff conducting the negotiations."

Mr O'Friel said the remaining prisoners were getting tired and suffering from lack of food. They were also subjected to other pressures, which he could not disclose, from prison staff trying to dislodge them.

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Two-mile blaze threatens moorland

By Ray Clancy

FIREMEN were fighting last night to prevent the destruction of large areas of the North Yorks Moors National Park.

Up to 100 firemen and estate workers were battling to control the blaze, which has destroyed more than six square miles of the park near the village of Coverdale.

The fire was last night burning on a two-mile front more than 24 hours after it started. At one stage 10ft flames could be seen leaping from the tinder-dry heather of East Witton Moor.

Large stretches of the moors national park were closed to walkers yesterday as firemen tried to control the fire.

High winds hampered the operation to put out the fire, which spread over 700 acres near Coverdale. Many parts of the park will remain closed over Easter because of the risk of further blazes.

Mr Geoff Cooper, the local fire station officer, said that the fire, which may have been started by a discarded cigarette, was the worst he had seen for many years.

Several popular walks, including the Cleveland Way between Osmotherley and Ulra Moor and the Lyke Wake Walk, could be closed for at least two weeks unless there is heavy rain.

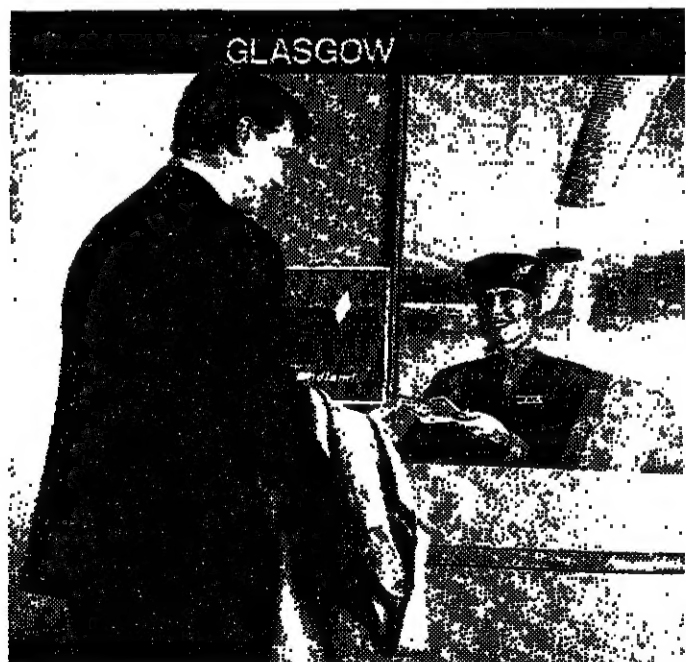
Mr Bob Cartwright, head of land management with the National Park Authority, said that a shortage of rainfall in the last few weeks combined with a lack of snow during the winter has left the soil, heather and heather tundra dry.

"We have to minimise the risk of accidental fire. We urge visitors to avoid the moorland and be vigilant," he said.

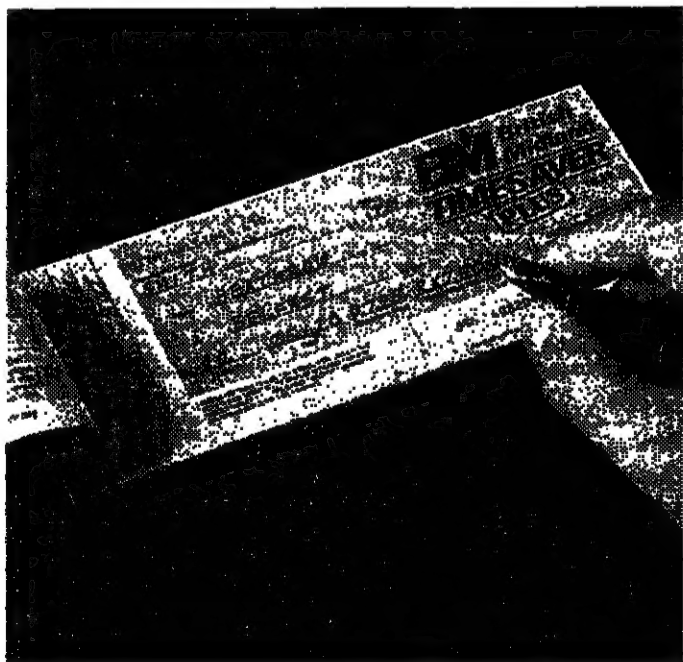


Firemen fighting the flames which have destroyed parts of the North Yorks Moor.

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Man jailed in war on international oil frauds

By David Sapsed

A BARRISTER was jailed yesterday in the first successful prosecution for a fraud so common that it threatens to cause an international oil trade crisis.

Tunde Ibikunle, aged 62, an honorary Nigerian chief, was jailed for four years and ordered to be deported back to his homeland at the end of his sentence for trying to sell £14 million of oil he did not own.

Ibikunle used fake documents to sell a non-existent consignment of almost 1.2 million barrels of Nigerian crude through the spot market in Rotterdam.

The International Maritime Bureau, which polices the seas from its London headquarters, says that such frauds are now running at two a week, costing independent oil companies millions of dollars a year.

"A flood of fraudulent documentation is being used by criminals in what threatens to become a major crisis in the international oil trade," the bureau said.

The frauds — known as

Nigerian Crude Scams — involve the preparation of bogus documents offering consignments of oil at slightly below the market price, to be sold on the spot market. The criminals obtain details of genuine consignments of oil, which are usually on the high seas, and then forge documents, normally in the name Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation.

They pose as the owners or as agents, often for high-ranking military officers who, they claim, have got the oil through their support for the Nigerian Government. They demand that prospective purchasers provide up to \$500,000 (£306,700) "up front" to cover the charter of the tanker and port expenses, a normal part of transactions in the rapid movements on the international oil market.

When they get the cash, they disappear, only to emerge from another base of operations a little later with a fresh batch of false papers.

Snaresbrook Crown Court was told that Ibikunle went one step further and attempted to sell a whole tankerload of oil to one independent oil company, Empire Petroleum International Inc, based in the United States.

He obtained \$150,000 from the head of the company, Mr Claude Rapose, allegedly for charter fees, and even allowed him to speak to a tanker captain confirming that the consignment was en route to Amsterdam. In fact, he was not even the captain of the ship carrying the load that Ibikunle claimed to own.

Ibikunle travelled to The Netherlands to seal the deal with an Empire executive, not realising that he was negotiating with a Dutch police investigator called in when Mr Rapose became suspicious.

Dutch officers worked with the Crown Prosecution Service, fraud investigation group, the Metropolitan Police, American and Nigerian authorities, and Mobil — whose tanker was carrying the oil the Nigerian claimed to own — to piece together the details of the fraud.

Ibikunle's conviction after a three-week trial was hailed by the Crown Prosecution Service as an example of what could be achieved with proper liaison between the police, the CPS and international oil companies.

Mr Tony Farries, a member of the fraud investigation group, said: "This is believed to be the first time that anybody anywhere had overcome the evidential and jurisdictional problems of bringing such a case."

Ibikunle was sentenced to four years for conspiring to obtain \$22,366,439 from Empire between September 1988 and April last year, and to three years, to run concurrently, for dishonestly obtaining \$150,000 from Mr Rapose by deception. He had pleaded not guilty.

The International Maritime Bureau has been so concerned at the extent of Nigerian crude frauds that it has called for a task force of police, insurers, oil companies, ship owners and traders to be established to devise a plan to thwart the practice.

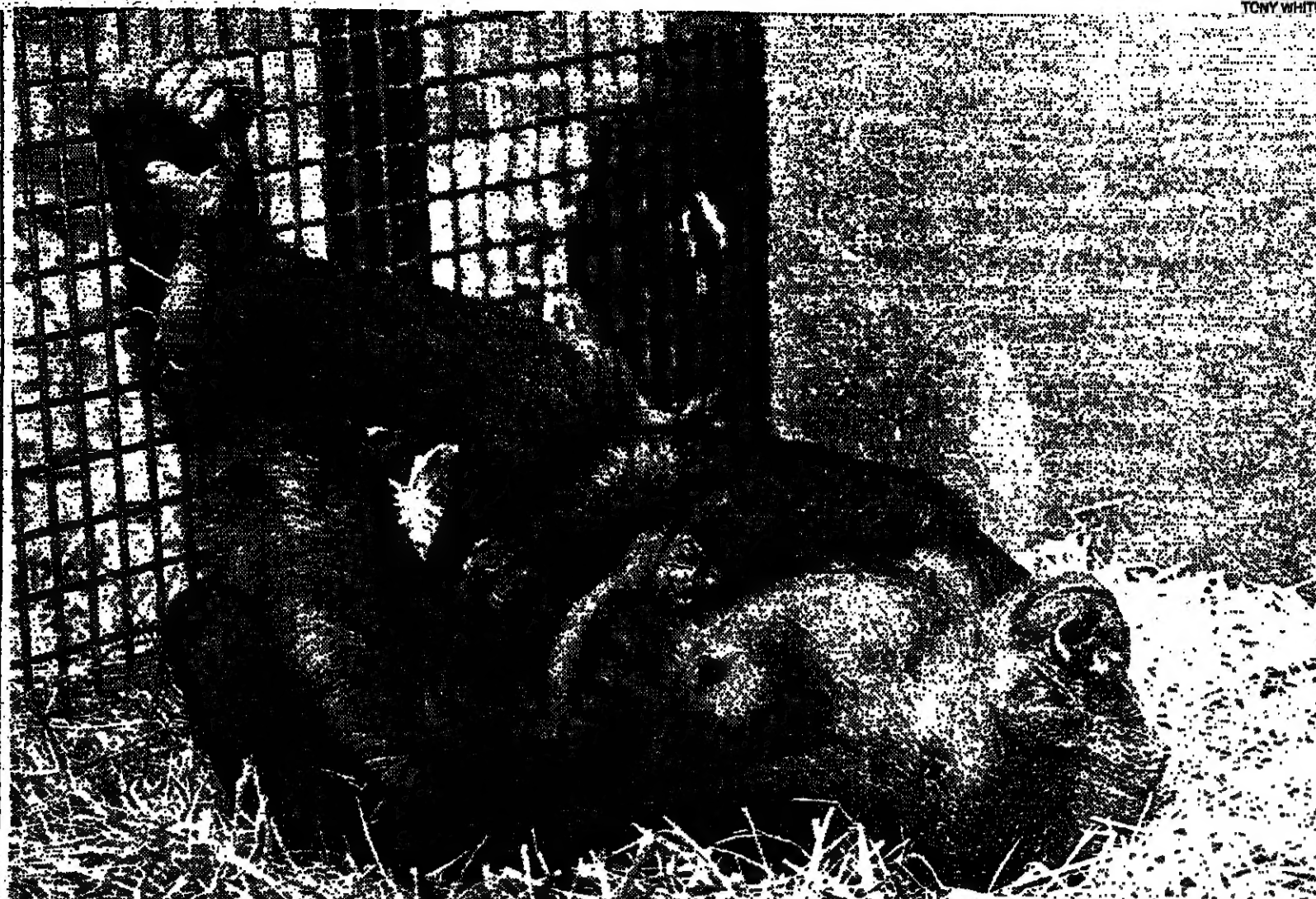
Overall, the risk to the rider in a 10-ride session is 0.04 chances in a million of death and 0.6 chances in a million of serious injury. Risks for each ride and per second were also calculated.

These risks, according to the study, are substantially lower than those incurred in a typical car or bicycle journey to and from a fair.

Risk of death to fairground workers, though based on few accidents, is, at 70 in a million a year, less than that encountered in the building industry.

There are key areas in fairgrounds where safety problems were identified.

An Assessment of Risks at Fairground Rides (Stationery Office, £5).



Less than a week old, baby gorilla Kuma snuggles up to her mother, Juma, at Howletts Zoo Park near Canterbury, Kent. Kuma, who weighed 3½lb at birth, is Juma's first baby and the 35th successful birth at Howletts, which now houses 37 gorillas and is the largest colony in the world. At Howletts numbers are growing fast and the aim is that within 10 years it will be possible to return whole families to the wild.

Officers seek damages for Hillsborough

By Mark Seuster

MORE than 130 police officers in South Yorkshire are expected to seek compensation from their own authority and Sheffield Wednesday football club for the psychological effects of the Hillsborough disaster.

A total of 53 officers have lodged claims with the South Yorkshire Police Authority for damages for "post-traumatic stress syndrome". Another 80 officers are likely to follow suit.

The development comes almost a year after the tragedy in which 95 Liverpool fans died.

The claims received do not name the Chief Constable, Mr Peter Wright, who retired on May 1. Should writs be issued, however, the defendants will be the authority and the chief constable.

The legal manoeuvres are similar to successful claims made by police officers after the fire at Bradford City Football Club in 1985 and King's Cross Underground station in 1987, which were settled out of court.

A senior South Yorkshire officer said yesterday: "One of the key factors of claims such as these is what does a police officer expect to get paid for."

"If everybody who gets into a traumatic situation is going to seek financial compensation from their senior officers,"

some people might think the nature of policing may be fundamentally changing," the officer said.

Mr Ian Walker, of Russell, Jones & Walker, the solicitors handling the claims, said: "These men and women have been deeply affected by what they saw. They have their own views why the disaster occurred. They feel slightly ambivalent about claiming against their own force. They have no choice. The alternative is to sue anonymous fans."

Writs will be served only if unsatisfactory compensation is offered or claims rejected.

● Solicitors for families of the 51 people who died in the Marchioness pleasure boat disaster on the Thames called on the RMC Group last night to lift the writ setting a limit of £852,000 in the amount of compensation to be paid to survivors and the bereaved (David Sapsed writes).

Mr Patrick Allen, spokesman for the solicitors' group representing the families and survivors, made the call after the announcement on Tuesday of a record £248 million profit for RMC last year. He said the group should pay the claims, expected to amount to about £6 million, in full.

East Coast Aggregates, a wholly owned RMC subsidiary which operates the dredger in collision with the Marchioness near Southwark Bridge in August, last month issued the writ seeking to limit the damages under the Merchant Shipping Act.

The company made the move in the High Court after the first writs were issued by claimants. Survivors have received interim payments of £3,000 from Commercial Union, insurers of the firm operating the pleasure boat, and some of the bereaved have received funeral expenses. No money has been paid by the RMC subsidiary.

Mr Wright: Not named in claims received so far

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Gold drug tests offer hope in treating Aids patients

By Thomson Prentice, Science Correspondent

GOLD has emerged as a potential new weapon in the fight against Aids, scientists disclosed yesterday.

An experimental compound containing tiny particles of the precious metal has been found in laboratory tests to block the action of HIV, the virus that causes the disease.

The compound has been shown in the tests to be more effective in some respects than AZT or zidovudine, the only drug licensed for the treatment of Aids. It will be some years before it can be considered suitable for use in patients.

Details of the research by American and French scientists were presented to an international conference in Manchester on the use of gold and other metals in medicine.

Gold is widely used in drugs

to control rheumatoid arthritis. The researchers have exploited scientific knowledge of the metal's therapeutic properties to develop the anti-HIV compound.

The project is being carried out at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, where the virus was first identified, and at the US Army Medical Research Institute for infectious diseases in Maryland.

Professor Herbert Blough, the leading American scientist involved, told the conference: "We think we have a new and promising approach for the treatment of Aids."

He emphasized that the work was still at a very early stage and there was no certainty that a "gold drug" against Aids would eventually become available.

The compound, known as

1-Aurothioglucose, works by blocking an enzyme crucial in the replication of the virus in infected cells.

Professor Blough gave details of the laboratory research to the conference at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology.

● The number of reported Aids cases in the United Kingdom rose by 136 last month to 3,157, bringing the figure for the first quarter of the year to 327 compared with 185 in the last three months of 1989 (Richard Ford writes).

Figures released by the Department of Health yesterday showed that 1,773 people, of the 3,157 reported cases, have died.

Health, page 18

Science, pages 33-36

Questions on sale of Lusitania report

By Sarah Jane Checkland, Art Market Correspondent

THE coroner's "inquisition" on a passenger from the Lusitania was bought for £4,620 by the Imperial War Museum at Onslow's auctions in London yesterday amid questions about the legality of the sale.

The sinking of the liner Lusitania by a German submarine in 1915 during its passage from New York to Britain is believed to have been the reason the United States entered the First World War.

The 12-page, hand-written document details the death of Captain R. Matthews, one of 1,198 people who died in the disaster, with depositions from 14 passengers.

It is signed by 12 jurors and John Joseph Horgan, the coroner, and charges the Emperor and Government of Germany with "the crime of wilful and wholesale murder before the tribunal of the civilized world".

It concludes: "The said deceased died from prolonged immersion and exhaustion in the sea eight miles South West of the Old Head of Kinsale", off southern Ireland, on May 7 1915.

The doubts about the legality of the sale were raised by Dr David Craig, director of the National Archive in Dublin, who said that he would probably have intervened had the sale been held in Ireland.

"It is outside our jurisdiction. We have tried to do it with exported documents, but failed," he said.

To his knowledge, the coroner is responsible for his reports during his life or until he loses office, whereupon they should have been transferred to the county records office.

Dr Craig acknowledged, however, that there was some confusion about the process, arising from the "strange legal position" of Irish coroners being appointed by the Ministry of Justice but being officers of the county.

He said he now feared that the success of the auction would unleash a flood of similar consignments.

Also sold at yesterday's auction was Turkish bath ticket number 657 from the Titanic. It sold for £990 (estimate £300-£500).

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Unholy row at church where organist silenced the vicar

By Robin Young

A CHURCH dating back to the 12th century faces an unholy row as Easter approaches.

At St Andrews, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham, the organist has been dismissed, the church council has re-

signed en bloc, and the vicar claims he has been given his marching orders.

Members of his congregation claim the vicar, the Rev John Marshall, is unmusical, obsessed with fund raising and caters inadequately for their spiritual needs. For his part Mr Marshall says the past six months have been a living hell. His part in services has been drowned by the organ, and he has faced rebellion in the pews.

The Bishop of Durham, the Right Rev David Jenkins, has called on parishioners to support the vicar at a meeting later this month.

The trouble started when members of the parochial church council disagreed with Mr Marshall's style of ministry. "Everything came to a head last October when a small group met to appoint a spokesman. The upshot was I was given my marching orders," Mr Marshall said.

He refused to go and 39 members of the parochial church council then resigned, forcing an annual meeting and fresh elections. The bishop has asked parishioners to support the vicar, but if rebel councillors stand for re-election the vote may be seen as a question of confidence in the priest.

The vicar recently dis-

missed Mr Keith Crosby, who had been the church's organist for 35 years, because of his allegedly "erratic behaviour". One churchgoer said this included drowning the vicar's words by starting to play too early and "wandering about" during services.

Mr Crosby said yesterday that he is taking his case to an industrial tribunal. "Musically Mr Marshall is a Radio 1 vicar. I have tried my best to get him to learn his parts but he might as well be deaf," he said.

The former organist accepted that there had been occasions when he drowned the vicar's voice with music, but said: "He is no musician. There are ways an organist can lead somebody on. If I give a push I can stop him hanging on to notes for ages."

"The vicar has a huge talent for raising money but it has become an obsession. It has become his sole form of occupation, but there is also the spiritual aspect to church."

Mr Maurice Cowley, former secretary of the parochial church council, said: "I think it is all a storm in a teacup."

Mr Marshall's wife, Monica, said yesterday that her husband did not wish to comment further as he was preparing for Easter.

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Summit hailed for bridging gaps in approach to drugs

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Correspondent

THE World Ministerial Drug Summit ended yesterday in London with a wide-ranging declaration and the belief that the gap between the drug consuming and producing nations has been bridged.

British ministers also feel that the £1 million conference, attended by 500 delegates from 112 countries, will be a benchmark for international efforts to curb drug demand.

The West and the Third World have discovered a common cause because both are suffering increasing addiction problems.

As the summit closed, however, Mr David Waddington, Home Secretary, said there had been no acceptance of the argument for legalization.

He said: "The summit has rejected absolutely the idea of legalization and I don't think there was any difficulty what-

soever for the summit coming to that decision."

Mr David Mellor, Minister of State at the Home Office with responsibility for drug problems, added: "Legalization is far more fascinating for the media than anyone involved in the summit. Everyone spoke within the framework of keeping international prohibition."

Summing up the three-day debate, the Home Secretary welcomed the United Nations decision to set up a single group within the UN to co-ordinate the international fight against drugs.

He said international effort was also needed to combat the trade in chemicals that could be used to process drugs like cocaine.

At the end of a summit that had seen suggestions of a difference of approach be-

tween the United States and European countries on drug abuse, Mr Waddington said that drug problems differed from country to country and therefore policies would equally differ.

Reducing the demand for drugs, he said, was not merely a matter for national or international action but affected everyone, including the public at large, parents and organizations within the fabric of the community.

Asked if the summit had been little more than a talking shop, the Home Secretary said that representatives of 112 countries would be returning home to put recommendations into action.

Mr Mellor said that, overall, attitudes had changed. "The consumer-producer dilemma is yesterday's argument because everyone who is a producer is a consumer."

Other attitudes had changed too. Only one country in Eastern Europe now claimed that drug abuse was the product of a capitalist society.

The 35-point declaration of the summit calls for national strategies in combating abuse and promises action on trafficking, educational strategies and a series of specific measures for fighting the spread of cocaine.

In the past days there have been changes from the draft declaration originally placed before delegates which shows that unanimity is still not always possible.

The draft advocated drug tests at the workplace — an idea applied in the United States — but this has been struck out from the final declaration.

So too has a clear endorsement of needle exchange problems — widely used in Europe — and this idea has been watered down.

Beyond the declaration a number of initiatives have been advertised.

The United Nations is to try to organize a world-wide system to measure drug abuse because no accurate statistics are available in spite of the size of the problem.

The United States has announced that it will support the British idea of a task force to help countries develop education programmes to stem demand for drugs.

Discussions were also to be held in finding ways of controlling the trade in chemicals used for illicit drugs production.



Judge Pickles will soon swap the bench for playing panel games. "A number of opportunities beckon," he says

Maverick judge set to put down his wig — and pick up his pen

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

THE rather sombre world of the legal establishment looks set to be robbed of its most maverick and colourful member when the outspoken circuit judge, Judge Pickles, hangs up his wig next year.

The longstanding thorn in the side of legal officialdom confirmed yesterday that from next July, he could retire on full pension after serving 15 years full-time on the bench. "I have not made up my mind," he said. "I am not committing myself, but I feel at the moment that I probably will retire some time after July. I think I have done enough."

He would not, however, be lost to his admiring public. No doubt to the chagrin of his judicial colleagues, he is likely to assume an equally high profile in panel games, chat shows and writing books and press columns. "A number of opportunities are beckoning."

The judge, who celebrated his 65th birthday two weeks ago, has more than any other come perilously close to being sacked for airing his controversial views in public.

Once off the bench, he says, he could speak even more freely. "I have got things to say to the public that they will be interested in. I know a lot about the workings of the law, how the establishment orders things and deals with judges behind the heavy curtain."

He will miss the bench.

"Everyone needs an office to go to and I like dealing with people and playing God with people's lives, especially if one thinks one has the right answers — though whether other people would agree is another matter."

He denies that he is under any pressure to retire, although the Lord Chancellor is considering what, if any, action to take over his remarks at a press conference held in a public house over his jailing of a teenage mother and her baby. "We are in friendly correspondence," he said. "It is not concluded."

Lord Mackay was a gentleman. "Everybody likes him."

It was under the previous Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham of St Marylebone — whom he tagged a "brooding, quixotic, dictator" and a "pompos, toffee-nosed old Eltonian" — that Judge Pickles came closest to dismissal. He continually defied the rules preventing judges from speaking out in public (these have since been abolished by Lord Mackay of Clashfern), and then went into print over attempts to silence him. Then,

of the plaintiff and awarded him compensatory damages of £5,000 for the admitted defamation and exemplary damages of £30,000 because they were satisfied on the evidence that the newspaper had invented the defamatory matter," the judge said.

The unprecedented issuing of the statement was taken as the strongest of rebukes over press reporting of the Lord Linley award.

The Queen's nephew had sued the newspaper over false allegations that he was banned from a public house in London after throwing beer over a friend.

More recently, the judge courted controversy in branding Lord Lane, Lord Chief Justice, as a "dinosaur living in the wrong age", after the Court of Appeal overturned his decision to jail a young mother and baby for theft.

The old guard have had their way for too long and they feel they are worried because we are going to reform things. We will win."

A radical over opening up the legal profession and judiciary (his favourite summary of its failings is the three Cs: conservatism, complacency and conformity), Judge Pickles nonetheless takes a tough line on sentencing.

As well as jailing the mother and baby for shop theft, he provoked criticism by sending into custody a woman who was frightened to give evidence against the boy friend accused of beating her up.

When he goes, the legal establishment may breathe a sigh of relief, but the public will be looking around for someone to inherit his role as a gad about the legal profession.

As he puts it, "There's too much conformity. It's time for people to say what they think."

Newspaper told not to interfere with the law

THE judge in the Lord Linley libel action against the *Today* newspaper yesterday delivered a strong attack over reports which he said sought to set aside the jury's £35,000 damages award (Frances Gibb writes).

Mr Justice Michael Davies said his attention had been drawn to certain press reports which "appeared whether intentionally or not to set aside the verdict of the jury other than by due process of law".

"This, if uncorrected, can only tend to destabilize the rule of law, as well as belittling the conscientious members of the jury who decided in favour

of the plaintiff and awarded him compensatory damages of £5,000 for the admitted defamation and exemplary damages of £30,000 because they were satisfied on the evidence that the newspaper had invented the defamatory matter," the judge said.

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Remarks to jury in rape hearing defended

By Our Legal Affairs Correspondent

JUDGE Raymond Dean, QC, ploughed deeper into controversy yesterday when he repeated his view made during a rape trial on Tuesday that "women don't always mean no when they say no".

As calls came for his resignation, the judge, aged 67, defended his remarks and said he had heard such views over the last 40 years expressed to jurors by more eminent judges than himself, in similar circumstances.

He said that if his remark had upset anyone he regretted it. He would not, however, give any undertaking that he would "not repeat that remark" if, in a similar minority of cases like the one he tried, there was "no support of any allegation of rape".

In spite of criticism from rape victim support groups, women's groups and MPs, the judge refused to back down from his comment to a jury at the Central Criminal Court trying Mr Dieter Kemp, aged 39, a German businessman, accused, and then acquitted, of rape.

"In the course of summing up the case and in the context of lack of corroborating evidence, I said: 'Sometimes — and I underline the word sometimes — even if a woman said no she may not really mean no,'" he said yesterday.

After the judge's remarks on Tuesday the Lord Chancellor's officials said that they were calling for a report of what he said.

Yesterday Judge Dean opened his remarks by saying: "I wish to say a few words in open court about something that I said in a case tried here earlier this week."

"The charge of rape, and rape when proved, is one of the gravest offences in the criminal calendar. The appropriate sentence in such a case is between five years at the bottom end and life imprisonment at the upper end."

"I have passed such sentences, including one of a sentence of life imprisonment, and I shall continue to do so in future when charges are proven. But it is by no means unknown for a man to be falsely accused of rape and in the case of Kemp the jury found him not guilty after a relatively short deliberation of one hour."

Mr Kemp was acquitted after his defence counsel, Mr Robert Fischel, told the jury that the woman consented to sexual intercourse at Kemp's flat in Kings Road, Chelsea, after they drank champagne and Japanese *saki* and smoked cannabis.

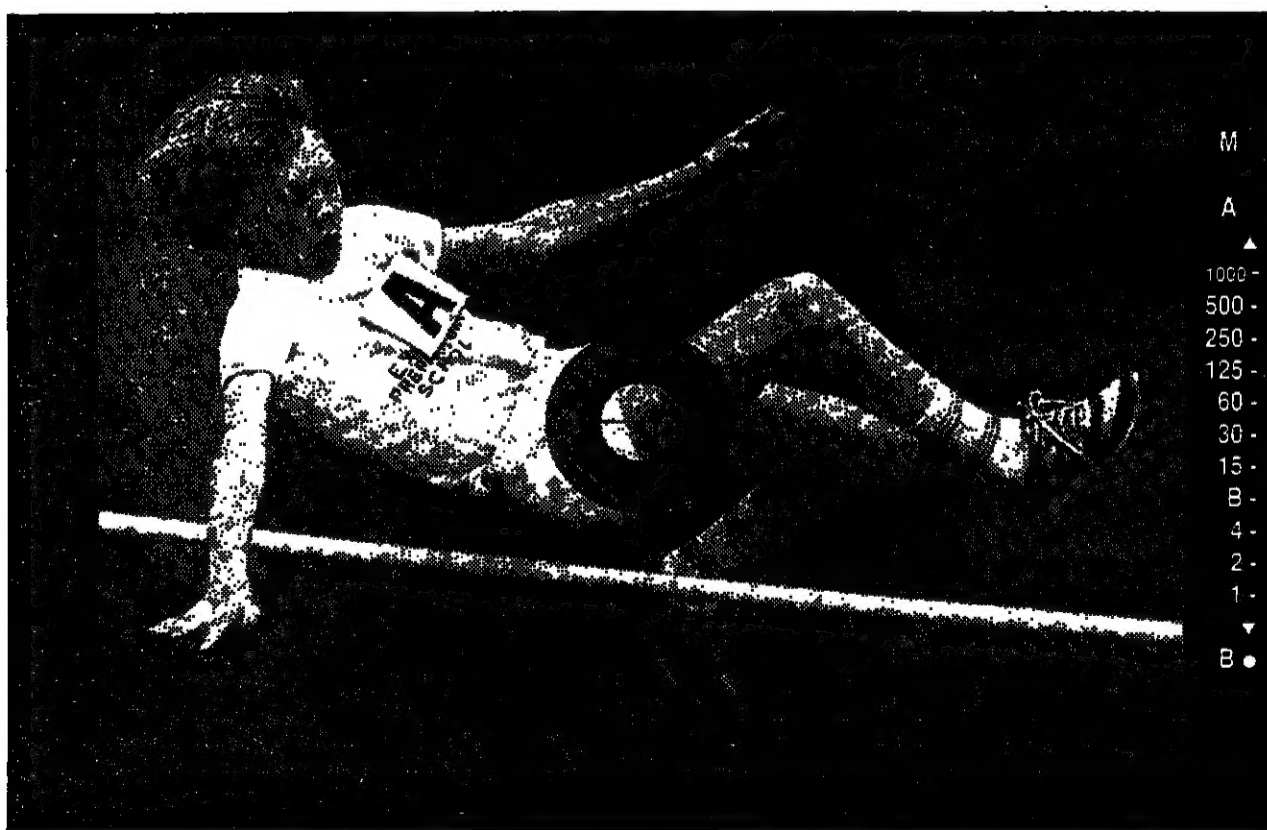
Mrs Audrey Wise, Labour MP for Preston, said Judge Dean's comment showed he was not competent to be a judge. "This is appalling. It is an invitation to rape and it makes men feel that it is OK."

Stamford Brown, aged 36, owner of a dress shop, who was jailed for seven years after being found guilty of rape at the Central Criminal Court, thanked Judge Brian Capstick, QC, and the jury yesterday for "a very fair trial".



Judge Raymond Dean's statement in court

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Pop stars help Aids research

Leading pop stars are to record an album and video of Cole Porter songs to raise money for Aids research. They are giving their services free and the Cole Porter estate is waiving royalties.

At the launch in London yesterday, however, Mr Malcolm Gerrie, executive producer of the Red, Hot and Blue project, said that it was still without a sponsor "because of the stigma of Aids".

Poll tax protest

Ffald Cymru launched a "can pay but won't pay" campaign yesterday for 100 volunteers who will refuse to pay poll tax and challenge its legality in the courts. They include 12 members of the party's national executive but not its three MPs.

Hanging plea

Mr Patrick O'Brien, president of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors, said yesterday the Irish Government should re-think its plans to abolish the death penalty.

Offices rammed

Police are hunting a man who rammed a mechanical digger into a two-storey office block on Marine Parade, Southampton, yesterday, leaving it on the verge of collapse and causing £400,000 worth of damage.

The road ahead

Police conducting sight tests on the M1 found a coach driver who was blind in one eye and who, as he manoeuvred between lanes, had no sense of what was happening on his left side.

Holiday lock-up

Tourists to Lincoln are being invited to spend their nights locked up in the dungeons of the 11th-century Lincoln Castle, where they can dine from an 18th-century prison menu.

New arrival

A white Mediterranean stock has brought bird watchers flocking to the north Norfolk coast. The breed has been sighted in the area only four times this century.

Firm is fined £1¼m after fatal blast

By Anthony Hodges

AN EXPLOSIVES company, whose van blew up killing a fireman and devastating an industrial estate, was fined £250,000 yesterday.

It is the largest fine imposed in England or Wales for a breach of Health and Safety Executive regulations.

Judge Astill, at Peterborough Crown Court, also ordered the Nobels Explosives Company to pay costs of £92,000.

It pleaded guilty to failing to conduct its undertaking in such a way as to ensure its employees and others were not exposed to risks to health and safety.

The court was told that the company, a wholly owned subsidiary of ICI, had been fined £100,000 with £30,000 costs last month after an explosion at its North Wales factory in which two employees died.

At Dumfries Court in 1988

it was fined £1,000 for an accident in which an employee lost part of his arm in an explosion.

Judge Astill said that every journey since 1985 to the Fengate industrial estate in Peterborough with specially adapted fuse heads had been the source of potential devastation with lorries passing through densely populated residential areas.

Mr David Richardson, for the company, said the accident had occurred because an adaptation to an existing fuse head had been requested by the fireworks company. The "intermediate" product had not gone through the packaging and transport arrangements for a new product.

Mr Phil Dent, for the Health and Safety Executive, said after the hearing that it was satisfied the size of the fine reflected the severity of the offence.

Industry urged to help cut level of divorce in Britain

By Ray Clancy

COMPANIES have a key role in reducing the divorce rate in Britain, a research organization said yesterday.

The Marriage Research Centre, which has renamed itself One Plus One to take account of social change which has led to couples living together, has taken the first steps towards persuading companies that the relationship between work and home is the issue of the 1990s.

The organization, founded in 1971 by Dr Jack Dominian, a consultant psychiatrist at the Central Middlesex Hospital in London, believes it is unacceptable that Britain, where 37 per cent of marriages are dissolved, has the joint highest divorce rate in Europe with Denmark and the third highest in the world after the US and the Soviet Union.

Speaking at the launch of the organization's new name, Dr Dominian said industry had to be persuaded to change its attitude. "We need to go beyond simple counselling

and change the outlook of executives, most of whom are men, to appreciate the importance of the home/work relationship," he said.

"Society has not grasped the adverse consequences of divorce. We have separated work from home life but we are now beginning to realize that this is not good for productivity, for family life, for health and for the country as a whole."

Dr Dominian, chairman of One Plus One, said he had approached a number of large companies, including Marks & Spencer, on the subject of providing counselling for employees. The response was favourable.

Now the aim is to encourage firms to go a step further and undertake to train managers so that they are more approachable and can recognize stress and problems among staff before they become serious issues.

"We have no illusions that we can change attitudes over-

night. This is an issue that needs to be addressed in the coming decade. Industry is already realizing the important role of women in the future."

Miss Penny Mansfield, the organization's deputy director, who has been undertaking detailed research on couples, said studies in the US had shown that there was an association between work performance and stability in personal relationships.

"We want to create a climate in the workplace where people can seek help if they have personal problems long before they would actually consider counselling."

Other key areas the organization was aiming to include the change, which needed to take a greater role in supporting marriages after the ceremony had taken place, and the dissemination of research material to doctors, teachers, solicitors and social workers so they could help couples at an earlier stage.

Teachers
Parents
Curb b
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FREE
SIO MINI
LOUR TV

Teachers demand parents' pledge to curb bullying

By David Tytler, Education Editor

PARENTS should be asked to sign an agreement requiring their children not to bully their schoolmates, a teachers' union was told yesterday.

Mrs Judith Seymour, a teacher at Sedgehill School, Canford, south London, said it was estimated that 1.5 million children are being bullied regularly at school every year.

She told the annual assembly of the Assistant Master and Mistresses Association in Blackpool that every school prospectus should publish the extent of bullying.

Parents should then sign an agreement with the school before their children were admitted, promising to ensure that they would not take part in bullying. If the children were later found to have bullied other pupils, parents would be involved in any disciplinary action.

Mrs Seymour said most victims suffered in silence and schools should consider setting up bully courts, run by pupils but overseen by teachers, as now happens in about two dozen schools.

Miss Bridget Sam-Bailey, of St Mark's Church of England School, Fulham, south London, told the assembly:

"Bullying not only takes place in the playground and in the classroom but I dare say in the staff room. To ignore it would be to normalize a criminal act."

"It is a disease of the heart which should be eradicated before it affects the lung and the brain."

Miss Sam-Bailey said that she had been bullied in the staff room by other teachers who had told stories about her to the head and snatched newspapers that she was reading.

She said there were many recent examples of bullying:

• A boy aged 14 at a private school, hanged himself after being forced to record a tape about his experiences with girls and told it would be played at the school dance.

• A "clever and beautiful" girl aged 15 in Scotland who ran away from school rather than face bullying.

• A boy killed by a van as he tried to escape his assailants.

• A boy attacked 50 times, including being thrown off a bus. During four hospital visits, he was treated for injuries to his spleen, kidneys and for a dislocated shoulder.

• A girl aged seven who drew a knife on a five-year-old.

The union agreed to ask the Department of Education and Science to carry out a study on bullying in schools.

Mrs Inez Preston, president of the association, sought separate rooms for teachers who wished to smoke. She said that it was essential to safeguard personal rights against "the outrageous suggestions being made which include a ban on hiring teachers who smoke."

Mr Philip Brooks, of Nottinghamshire, said: "We should not put our colleagues in the position where they have to go round the back of the bike sheds if they want to smoke."

Mr Patrick Kewell, of Clevedon School, Bristol, said: "It is unfortunate that smokers are likely to become staff-room pariahs but there is simply not enough room to find separate accommodation so that one person can calm his nerves."

Mr Peter Smith, joint general secretary, said: "Schools must have a policy on smoking for staff. If they don't they could be in real trouble."

Labour sees vote winner in record on nursery schools

By Sam Kiley, Higher Education Reporter

LABOUR'S education team yesterday entered the battle for control of local authorities with the release of figures showing that parents have less than a 30 per cent chance of getting their children into a nursery school if they live in a Conservative-run authority.

Mr Jack Straw, Labour's front-bench education spokesman, said that figures supplied by the Department of Education and Science revealed that the "top 22 providers of education for three and four

year olds were all Labour authorities". He said there were no Labour-run Local Education Authorities in England among the bottom 30 of the 96 education authorities.

At the top of Labour's list is Walsall in the West Midlands where 92.6 per cent of children under five have places in locally funded nursery and infant schools or classes.

This compares with West Sussex, a Tory authority where 9 per cent of children have places. The issue of

nursery provision has become increasingly pressing for both parties as larger numbers of women wish to return to work after having children.

Industry too has been anxious to encourage mothers, notably those with degrees and other specialist skills, to return to work to fill an ever widening skills-gap.

The best performance from a Tory authority in providing nursery places for local children came from Solihull where 65 per cent of children can be accommodated — a better showing than nearby Birmingham (64.1 per cent) which is Labour controlled.

While northern authorities manage to provide extensive facilities for toddlers, eight local authorities in the south offer less than a fifth of those aged three and four places in primary schools. They are Hampshire, Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bromley (south London), Hereford and Worcestershire, Kent and West Sussex.

The Labour team rejected the suggestion that nursery provision in the South was low because demand was low. In areas where demand had been measured such as Strathclyde and Manchester, local authorities had discovered it was not being met. In North Tyne-side 87.3 per cent of children aged three to four receive formal education, Solihull (85 per cent), Liverpool (83.9 per cent), and South Tyneside (83.1 per cent).

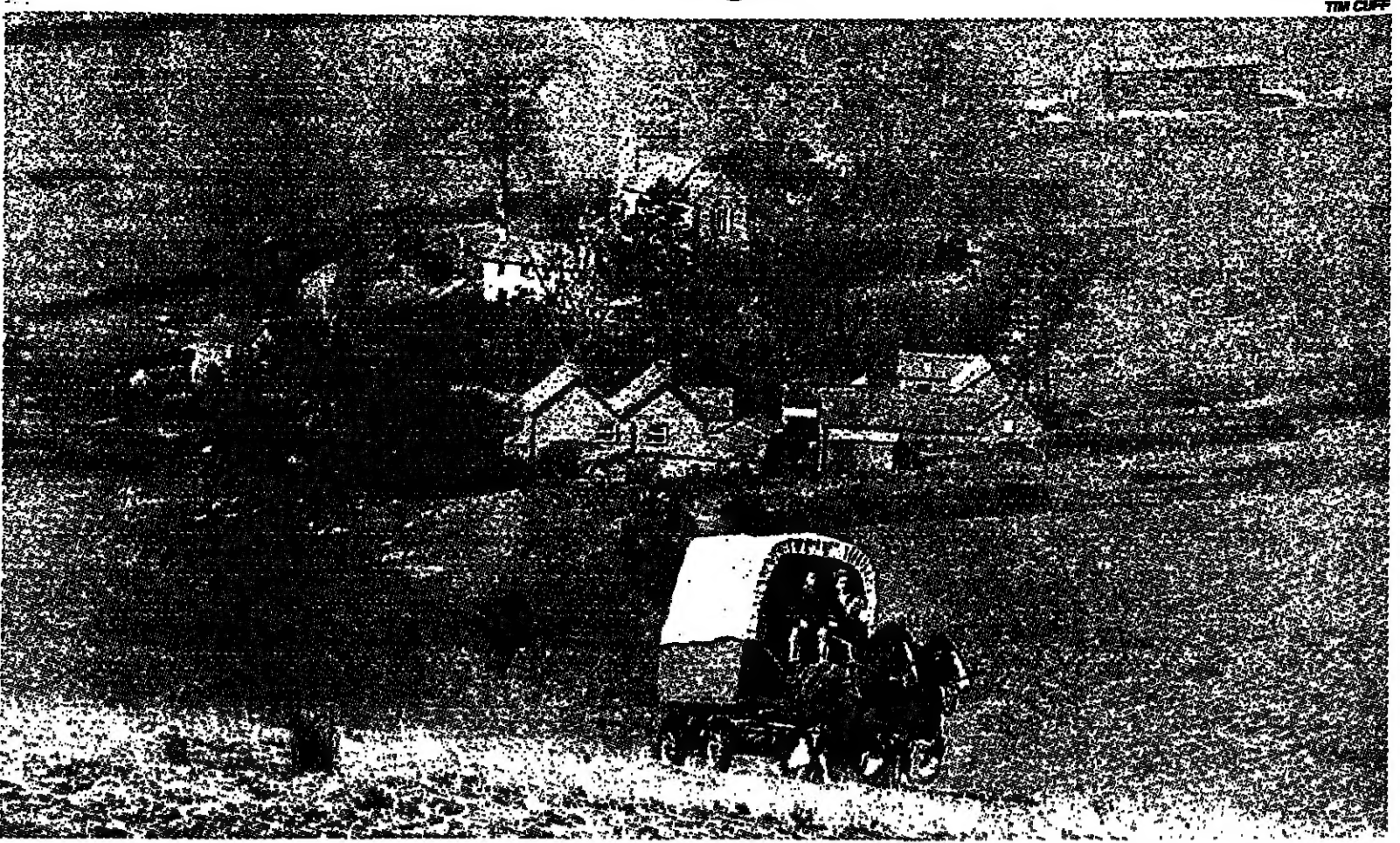
A spokeswoman for the Department of Education and Science said that the "participation rate for three to four year olds in some form of educational experience is 86 per cent" across the country. This includes child care and playgroups.

• The Government yesterday announced a 7 per cent increase in places available on teacher training courses in England and Wales over the next three years.

Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds in nursery and infant classes (England, January 1989)

Authority	%	Authority	%
Walsall (Lab)	92.6	Northamptonshire (Con)	54.2
North Tyneside (Lab)	87.3	Cheshire (Lab)	53.7
Salford (Lab)	85.0	Essex (Lab)	51.5
Liverpool (Lab)	83.9	Wirral (Lab)	51.4
South Tyneside (Lab)	83.1	Inner London (Lab)	50.0
Sandwell (Lab)	77.5	Essex (Con)	49.8
Cleveland (Lab)	74.4	Warwickshire (Con)	49.7
Wolverhampton (Lab)	74.3	Walsham Forest (Lab)	49.1
Tameside (Lab)	74.1	Lancashire (Lab)	49.0
Doncaster (Lab)	73.0	Stockport (Lab)	47.9
Manchester (Lab)	71.7	Dudley (Lab)	47.7
Newcastle on Tyne (Lab)	70.8	Herefordshire (Con)	47.0
Kewley (Lab)	70.7	Avon (Lab)	47.0
Derham (Lab)	70.1	Harrow (Con)	45.8
Wakefield (Lab)	69.8	North Yorkshire (Con)	45.6
Gateshead (Lab)	69.6	Cambridgeshire (Con)	45.5
Bolton (Lab)	67.5	Staffordshire (Lab)	44.6
Barnsley (Lab)	67.4	Cambridgeshire (Con)	43.5
Hounslow (Lab)	67.4	Isle of Wight (Dem)	42.5
Sunderland (Lab)	67.0	Richmond (Lab)	40.5
Oldham (Lab)	66.5	Thames (Dem)	37.5
Barking (Lab)	65.8	Havering (Lab)	37.4
Solihull (Con)	65.0	East Sussex (Con)	37.3
St Helens (Lab)	64.9	Leicestershire (Lab)	36.9
Stratford-on-Avon (Lab)	64.1	Derby (Con)	36.9
Selby (Lab)	63.8	Bedfordshire (Lab)	36.4
Haringey (Lab)	63.2	Croydon (Con)	34.8
Ealing (Lab)	62.8	Somerset (Con)	34.0
Calderdale (Lab)	62.2	Shropshire (Con)	33.6
Sheffield (Lab)	61.3	Gloucestershire (Con)	31.6
Merton (Con)	60.5	Suffolk (Con)	30.8
Bury (Lab)	59.8	Lincolnshire (Con)	30.8
Leeds (Lab)	59.8	Northfolk (Con)	30.7
Blackburn (Lab)	59.3	Truro (Con)	27.7
Brent (Lab)	59.1	Bexley (Con)	26.8
Kirklees (Lab)	58.6	Redbridge (Con)	26.6
Northumbria (Lab)	58.6	Devon (Con)	26.4
Wigan (Lab)	58.3	Berkshire (Con)	25.4
Derbyshire (Lab)	57.3	Sussex (Lab)	25.1
Bradford (Con)	56.8	Surrey (Con)	23.6
Newham (Lab)	56.8	Essex (Con)	21.8
Barnet (Con)	56.6	Hampshire (Con)	20.0
Rotherham (Lab)	55.5	Wiltshire (Con)	18.4
Kingston on Thames (Con)	55.5	Oxfordshire (Lab)	18.3
Nottinghamshire (Lab)	55.4	Buckinghamshire (Con)	18.3
Covey (Lab)	55.1	Bromley (Con)	16.3
Cumbria (Lab)	55.0	Hereford & Wex (Con)	16.1
Hampshire (Lab)	54.9	West Sussex (Con)	9.0

Farmer hitches his wagon to tourism's star



FARMER John Waterer and his wife Fiona head off from the village of Twicken, Devon, in their covered wagon. On Easter Monday they are to begin rural rides for tourists with trips across Exmoor.

Mr Waterer, aged 30, believes that the wagon, drawn by two heavy horses, is the perfect way for visitors to soak up the atmosphere of the rolling countryside.

In good weather 12 passengers can roll up the canvas sides of the wagon as they take the four-mile trip around Twicken, where Mr Waterer and his wife run a small sheep and cattle farm. He said: "We will be running the trips until September and hope to take out three or four groups a week. It is not a huge industry but it is fun."

Freight firm fined over beagle deaths

A TRANSPORT company was fined £5,000 yesterday after 79 beagle puppies suffocated on board its lorry while on a ferry bound for Sweden.

Monock Freight was also ordered to pay £4,150 costs after being found guilty of causing unnecessary suffering.

The 79 beagles were part of a consignment of 100 being taken from Alpha Sirius kennels of Malvern, Hereford and Worcester, to a Swedish pharmaceutical company which was to use them to test drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

They were carried on a closed lorry with no independent ventilation system, and passengers on the Harwich to Gothenburg ferry said they heard the dogs screaming as they suffocated.

Monock Freight, of Feltham, west London, denied causing the beagles to be carried by road and sea in a way likely to cause them unnecessary suffering.

Mr Thomas Bernard, chairman of Harwich magistrates, said the bench had found that the vehicle was unsuitable for carrying the dogs and therefore the company was guilty.

The court was told that Mr John Weber, a Monock Freight director, had received hate mail and needed 24-hour protection.

Mr Frank Gillibrand, for the defence, said Monock was a family-run business and that Mr Weber had suffered both personally and professionally from the publicity surrounding the case.

Mr Weber was as horrified as anybody else by what took place. Since this incident the company has not had

anything to do with the cargo of dogs," he said.

Miss Louise Molyneux, of the National Anti-Vivisection Society, said: "The export of live animals for experimentation should be banned. They may be subjected to experiments that would be illegal in this country."

• An RSPCA official made a renewed call for dog registration yesterday after disclosing record numbers of animal cruelty cases in Wales.

There were 150 convictions for cruelty in Wales last year, compared with 99 the previous year. Seventy-eight of the cases involved ill-treatment of dogs.

Mr Bill Cottingham, an RSPCA regional superintendent, said registration would provide a framework to keep track of irresponsible owners.

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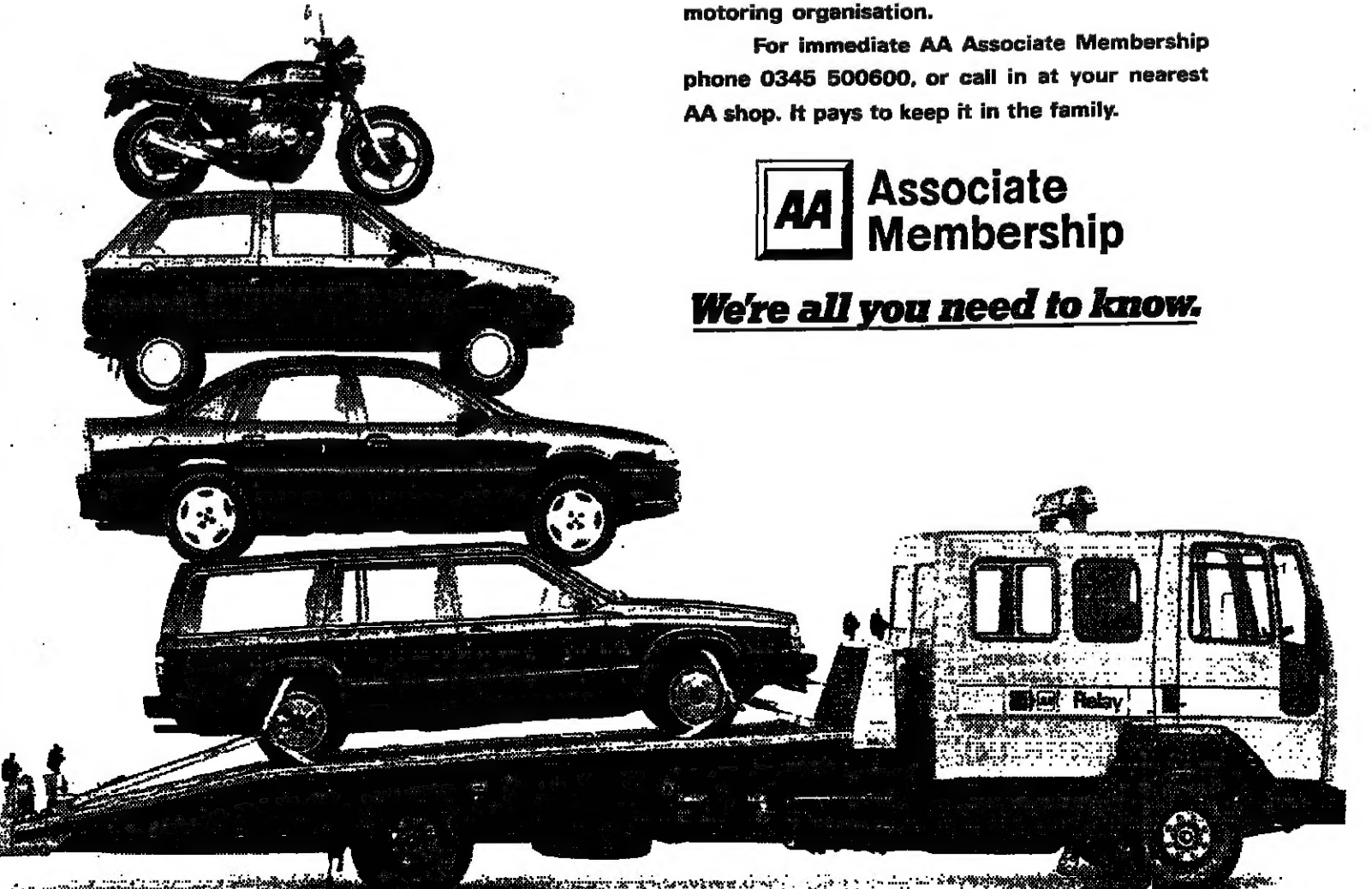
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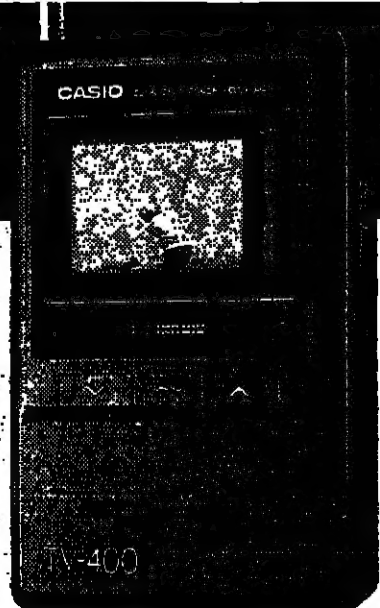
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CT12

Social fund paid £2m to people not eligible for help

By Jill Sherman, Social Services Correspondent

NEARLY £2 million has been paid from the social fund to those not entitled to the money, while those eligible for help were denied it when the fund ran out of money, an Audit Office report disclosed yesterday.

Another £400,000 was wrongly distributed in overpayments to claimants, according to the report, which goes on to criticize the Department of Social Security's accounting system.

Mr John Bourn, Comptroller and Auditor General, decided to "qualify" the social fund account - which means it is not approved in its entirety - because there was significant doubt about the accuracy of the figures from 1988-89, its first full year of operation.

The social fund, designed as a safety net for the poor, provides interest-free loans for essential items such as cookers, bedding and furniture, replacing the system of single payments that operated until April 1988. Grants from the fund cover funeral expenses, maternity, community care and cold weather payments.

The fund has come under

heavy criticism, partly because the amount allocated (£198 million in 1988) was half that spent under an earlier single payment system and partly because it has been badly administered. The High Court ruled this year that the Government had acted unlawfully in setting cash limits at local benefit offices.

"There has never been a more disaster-prone way of paying benefit," Mr Michael Meacher, Labour's social security spokesman said yesterday. "The court said it was illegal to cash-limit budgets. Now the Audit Office has condemned its chaotic and inefficient operation. This report ought to be the social fund's final nail."

The National Audit Office estimated that £1.9 million had been paid out wrongly in budgeting loans and £400,000 had been overpaid in maternity, funeral payments and community care grants.

"I estimated, therefore, that the overall level of overpayments in the account amounted to £2.3 million, representing 1.2 per cent of total payments," Mr Bourn said.

The report was also critical

of the Department of Social Security's accounting system for loan repayments, most of which are deducted weekly from applicants' other benefits, such as income support.

It is up to benefit sections to notify social fund officers when repayments start and when they have been fully repaid. However, a faulty computer system indicated that borrowers had repaid more than they actually had.

Mr Bourn said that even though the department had tried six versions of the computer software, there were still discrepancies in the figures.

"I consider that there is significant doubt about the accuracy of the figures for repayments of budgeting loans (£40.1 million) and repayments of crisis loans (£7.7 million) as presented in the account," Mr Bourn said. "Furthermore I consider there must be uncertainty over the accuracy of figures for loans outstanding totalling £75.8 million at 31 March 1989."

His audit also found accounting errors where payments had been incorrectly charged to other social security accounts.



Jimmy Savile, the television personality and fund raiser, kept on training for the London Marathon yesterday while ordering a £750,000 scanner for Stoke Mandeville Hospital. The order form was handed to him to sign "on the run" by Mr Masaki Mizutani, of Mitsui plc which is supplying the machine. Money for the scanner, the world's smallest magnetic resonance imager, was raised through the Jimmy Savile Trust.

Building heritage to be audited

THE biggest audit undertaken of Britain's built heritage is to be carried out by the Civic Trust, sponsored to the sum of £40,000 by Mortgage Express, a branch of the Trustee Savings bank (Simon Tait writes).

The trust is to circulate detailed questionnaires to its 500,000 members in 1,000 branches across the country, Mr Martin Bradshaw, its director, said.

"We have to lobby the Government on

behalf of our members, and we don't have a clear understanding of exactly what they think of the area in which they live.

"We believe there is very strong feeling about poor design and greenfield development, but we want to make sure we represent members' views and sharpen our approach; and we want to be able to put pressure on the Department of the Environment on the right points."

Increased fees send up cost of selling a home

By Christopher Warman, Property Correspondent

THE cost of selling a home has gone up sharply in the last year, largely because of increased fees by "hard pressed" estate agents, although the cost of buying is slightly lower, the Woolwich Building Society says in its annual cost-of-moving survey.

In England and Wales the average estate agent's fee has risen to nearly 2.5 per cent of the selling price, including VAT, compared with last year's figure of 1.9 per cent.

For a £100,000 property the average total cost of selling is £2,871, £378 more than in 1989. Agents charge £2,478 to sell a property of that value, an increase of £432.

The Woolwich says that the highest increase in agents' fees has been in the South, due to the sluggish property market. In Greater London, agents in Bromley are charging the most, an average 2.9 per cent of the selling price. In the South-east, Luton has the most expensive agents, charging on average 3.5 per cent. Fees in Oxford are the cheapest at around 2.6 per cent.

The cost of buying a £100,000 home is £40 less - £1,855 - compared with last year, the result of increased competition for conveyancing and reduced charges by removal firms.

Solicitors are more willing to negotiate fees for buying and selling. The average solicitor's fee for buying a £100,000 property in 1989 was £460. Today it is £416. To sell at the same price the average fee is £393 compared with £447 a year ago.

More than 1,000,000 households moved during 1989, taking an average of four months from the date a mortgage offer was made.

Local authorities are continuing to use unfair methods to secure building maintenance contracts in spite of the 1988 Local Government Act which was introduced to encourage fair competition for the contracts, the Build-

ing Employers Confederation claims today.

The confederation says that a recent survey conducted in the construction industry revealed "disturbing" signs of continuing abuse.

Councils spend around £1 billion on day-to-day building contracts and the survey suggests that some local authorities take advantage of loopholes to discourage private sector tenders.

The confederation is calling on the Government to curb these abuses and recommends that more resources should be devoted to monitoring the implementation of the 1988 Act.

Architects call for 'green' aid

TAX perks and lower VAT charges should be introduced to encourage developers to use environmentally friendly building materials, the Royal Institute of British Architects (Riba) said yesterday (Christopher Warman writes).

It also argued for laws phasing out the use of harmful chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in new buildings, and called on the Government to include these recommendations in the Environment White Paper.

Riba said that tax incentives could improve insulation standards, saving energy lost. It wants the introduction of mandatory energy efficiency ratings for all new buildings on the lines of fuel-saving standards for cars.

Mr Max Hutchinson, Riba president, said: "We desperately need hard factual information if we are to be able to take the responsible decisions that society now expects from us."

Under new regulations homes built after April 1 must be 20 per cent more energy efficient.

Horace as father of modern PR

By Philip Howard

WAS the poet Horace the first PR-man and advertising flack in the Western world? The Classical Association meeting at the University of Kent at Canterbury yesterday considered Horace as forerunner of the Satchi brothers and our other crafty image-makers.

Dr Oliver Lyne of Balliol gave a paper on Horace's prudent image-building in the perilous 30s BC, when the Three Men ruled the world and a bad image could be a passport to Hades.

Dr Lyne argued that Horace had two secret chips on his shoulders. Although he was well off, because his father had made his way up into the middle classes, he had been impoverished by the Civil War. Horace had become economically dependent on his patron. His position was embarrassingly like that of the primitive client-poet: a bit above the butler, but not much. Horace would dearly have liked to avoid this loss of independence and gentility.

His second sensitivity was that he had solicited and won the patronage of Maecenas, the right-hand man of the regime that had defeated the Republican cause. Horace had fought as a senior officer for the Republicans.

It might have occurred to the unkind to think of Horace as a rat-fink and turncoat. But Dr Lyne showed how Horace, until the Battle of Actium settled the future for the next four centuries, was at pains to present himself in his *Satires* as having opted out of politics al-

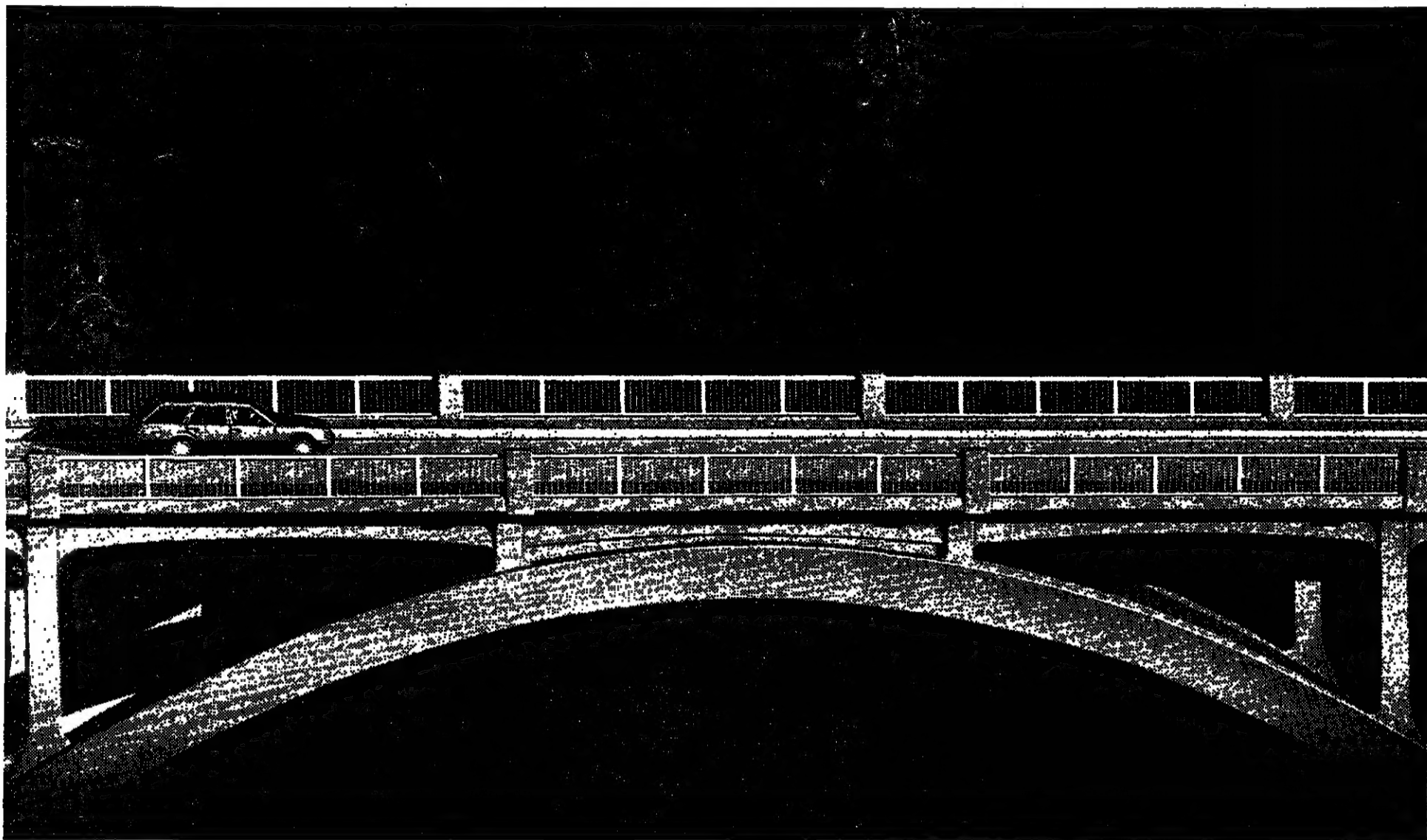
together, and as just good friends (nothing mercenary, you understand) in the Garick Club mafia of the Maecenas circle.

Dr M M Mackenzie of New Hall, Cambridge, had a close encounter of the dialectical kind with Plato. One of the puzzles of Plato's dialogues is the pretty wrapping paper they come in. The bare analytic argument at their centre comes gift-wrapped in charming stories about Socrates bumping into friends and acquaintances, and falling into conversation about the way the world works.

You might think that the filly bits around the edge of the hard philosophy, the fiction, and allusion, and irony, are subterfuges to lure us into the hard stuff in the middle.

Dr Mackenzie argued that on the contrary the wrapping is an essential part of the argument. The framework is part of the philosophy; the rhetoric works with the logic to produce the state of psychological "discomfort", which Socrates used on his interlocutors and subsequent readers. All Western philosophy is carrying on an intricate and enchanting conversation started by Plato 24 centuries ago.

Mr Jeremy Paterson, of Newcastle University, showed that the Roman attitudes to the countryside in their literature were as artificial as ours. Writing about farming was a romantic literary genre. *Country Living* more than *Farmer's Weekly*.



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Rafsanjani paper boosts hopes for Western hostages

From Christopher Walker, Cairo

FRESH hopes for movement in Lebanon's long running hostage crisis were raised yesterday when a leading Tehran paper called for Tuesday's release of three Europeans by Palestinian kidnappers to be the catalyst for the freeing of all their hostages still in captivity.

The call was welcomed by Western officials aware of the prime role to be played by Iran in any deal to free Westerners held in Lebanon, but they cautioned that it must be seen in the light of a deep split inside Iran's leadership on the question.

The freedom demand was the third and strongest issued by the *Tehran Times* since it began in February to campaign publicly for an end to holding hostages. The paper is the main mouthpiece of the

pragmatic wing of the Iranian leadership headed by President Rafsanjani.

Referring to the couple released in West Beirut on Tuesday with their daughter after a covert deal between Paris and the Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi, the paper declared the hope that their freedom was "a prelude to the freedom of all the hostages, regardless of their nationality, religion and beliefs".

The comment, the wide circulation of which by the Iranian news agency Irna was part of the bitter struggle between pragmatists and radicals over the hostages, added unequivocally: "In fact, the issue of hostage-taking should come to an end for all, without discrimination."

The newspaper, which noted that large numbers of

Muslims held in Israeli jails should also be considered as hostages, emphasized: "The Islamic Republic has time and again announced its outright opposition to hostage-taking as the country finds it a contradictory with the Islamic teachings and regards it a serious violation of human relations."

Its message was clearly directed to members of Hezbollah, the pro-Iranian umbrella group holding most mainstream hostages still imprisoned in Lebanon. But its followers have shown themselves loyal to Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, the radical former Interior Minister who wanted last month: "Freeing the hostages would unleash the blood-drinking wolves."

Mr Mohtashemi's hard line has been boosted by the uncompromising stand of the Iranian Parliament, which on March 25 presented the Government with a statement signed by 170 of its 270 members demanding an end to the campaign to free the hostages.

A diplomat said that the Parliament's radical make-up would not be altered before new elections.

The split in Iran's leadership was clearly shown yesterday when a leading deputy issued a belated call for US military bases and economic and political interests abroad to be the target of a new wave of attacks by Islamic militants.

The demand came from a parliamentary deputy, Qorban Ali Salehabadi, who told Parliament that the new attacks should be launched in revenge for the resolution by the US Senate to declare Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

BRUSSELS: The Fatah Revolutionary Council of Abu Nidal, which released three hostages on Tuesday, has issued encouraging signals that Belgium's four remaining captives may be released shortly, despite its insistence on two key conditions (Peter Guilford writes).

"I hope we will be able to release the Houckins family soon, as we have just done with the family of Jacqueline Valente," said Mr Walid Khaled, an FRC spokesman.

Mr Emmanuel Houckins, his wife Godelieve Kats and their children Laurent and Valerie, aged 18 and 19, were kidnapped from the same boat as his brother Bernard, Mme Jacqueline Valente and their daughter Sophie-Liberte.

Mr Khaled claimed that the four had all been agents of Mossad, the Israeli secret service.

Abu Nidal is still insisting that a Palestinian bomber, Nasser Al Said, in jail in Louvain, Belgium, for bombing an Antwerp synagogue 10 years ago, be released first. The Belgian authorities, too, must "limit the activities" of Mossad on Belgian soil.

Camera-shy prisoner linked to candidate's death



Two members of the Colombian Intelligence and Security Agency forcing Señor Gustavo Mesa Meneses, said to have confessed to killing a journalist last year, to pose for the press in Bogotá on Tuesday. The police believe he was implicated in the assassination of Bernardo Jaramillo, the left-wing presidential candidate, and say they have "indisputable proof" that the killing was ordered by drug barons

Californian offensive against tobacco firms

From Charles Bremner, New York

CALIFORNIANS opened the newspapers and switched on television yesterday to find an array of tough and anti-smoking advertisements accusing the tobacco companies of racism, cynicism and manipulation.

The \$29 million (£17 million) offensive, financed by the state from a new cigarette tax, constitutes an aggressive new approach to weaning the American public from the tobacco habit. Given California's role as pioneer in social issues, other states are likely to follow its lead.

"Cigarette smoking kills blacks more than whites," runs the slogan in one of a battery of commercials and print advertisements aimed at alerting smokers to deceptions employed by tobacco companies. In another, a black youth sings about tobacco: "We used to pick it. Now they want us to smoke it."

Similar advertisements are being published in Spanish, Vietnamese, Laotian, Chinese and other languages. Minority moans are being singled out because the tobacco companies have focused intensely on marketing cigarettes to non-white groups and to women as the habit has fallen sharply among white men.

Cigarette advertising has been banned on radio and television in the United States since 1970, but, unlike in Europe, smoking is still portrayed in print and poster

advertising as a glamorous activity.

The targeting of blacks by cigarette firms has prompted some black leaders to accuse the companies of "genocide". In New York, California and other states, black activists have been painting over cigarette advertisements in public places.

"When you drive through the ghetto, all you see are cigarette and alcohol ads," said Mr Paul Key, the chairman of the Los Angeles agency which is producing the anti-cigarette advertisements. "The ads are about exploitation. They are about genocide."

The companies come under fire in full-page advertisements. "Warning: The tobacco industry is not your friend," says a "health warning" in the same format as the one on cigarette packs.

One 30-second commercial shows men in a dark room discussing ways of wooing

new smokers to replace the thousands who give up or die each day. Demonic laughter is heard as one man says: "Forget all that cancer-heart disease-emphysema-stroke stuff. Gentlemen, we are not in this for our health."

Dr Kenneth Kizer, the state's Health Director, said the campaign, by far the biggest of its type launched in America, is intended to persuade smokers that smoking is "dumb, dirty and dangerous". About 30,000 Californians are estimated to die from smoking-related diseases every year.

The new 25-cent-per-pack cigarette tax which pays for the advertisements was approved by 58 per cent of the electorate in a referendum last year.

The tobacco industry is engaged in a costly counter-offensive against draconian new smoking legislation in a majority of states. It is now expected to intensify its campaigning in California.

Tanks in Karachi as tension mounts

From Zahid Hussain, Karachi

TANKS and armoured cars were deployed in Karachi yesterday as tension mounted following the death of a leader of the ruling Pakistan People's Party.

He has refused to call off his fast until the Mohajir activist arrested on the murder charge is released. Mr Hussain has appealed to President Ishaq Khan of Pakistan to intervene so as to defuse the situation.

Miss Benazir Bhutto, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, in a statement, condemned the murder of Mr Ahmed, and said her Government would not surrender to the terrorist-like activities.

She said people involved in murder would not be freed. However, she offered to open a dialogue with the opposition movement.

Leaders of the combined opposition parties, which includes the Mohajir movement, were meeting in Lahore yesterday to discuss the volatile situation in Karachi. The combined opposition has blamed Miss Bhutto's Government of creating strife in Karachi and Sind provinces.

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Gadaffi praise sets off outcry

From Philip Jacobson, Paris

JUST a day after three former hostages were released in west Beirut as a result of France's covert deal with Libya, the press has sharply criticized the praise lavished on Colonel Gaddafi by President Mitterrand and other politicians.

Widespread agreement that France scored a diplomatic success in securing the freedom of Mme Jacqueline Valente, who is French, her Belgian companion, Mr Fernand Houckins, and Sophie-Liberte, their young daughter, after 880 days in captivity was overshadowed by unease about handing a significant public relations coup to what one newspaper denounced as "the real jailer" in Tripoli.

For *Le Quotidien de Paris*, the conservative daily, the Foreign Ministry's communiqué hailing the Libyan leader for his role in negotiating the deal with the Abu Nidal Palestinian terror group was outrageous. "The king of explosives becomes the king of hearts," it observed in a scathing editorial.

More stern criticism from the right came in *Le Figaro*, whose front-page comment maintained that the Libyan leader had manoeuvred the Government into "saluting him, cap in hand".

It had always been clear, the newspaper added, that Colonel Gaddafi was behind the kidnapping of the hostages aboard the *Silco*, their converted fishing boat - hence the persistent rumours that they had actually been held in Tripoli and were handed over to Abu Nidal only for the carefully staged charade of their release in Beirut.

Even the left-of-centre *Libération*, normally supportive of the Socialist Government,

concluded that M Mitterrand's effusive expression of thanks went too far.

As for *Le Monde*, widely considered a touchstone of the Socialist Government's thinking, it conceded that there was some justification in Britain's furious reaction. "Intransigent in its own refusal of any contact with hostage takers, Great Britain has a fine time laying down the law to us, pointing out that France... is making a mockery of (European) Community resolutions on terrorism," it said.

Although the Government can safely ignore its critics, a certain defensiveness is becoming apparent.

Its public reaction has so far been confined to a brief comment by M Roland Dumas, the Foreign Minister. "The proof of the success of our policy is that those three are back here," he told the state-run television channel, Antenne 2, which had displayed the front page of *The Times* of yesterday to illustrate how critically the deal with Colonel Gaddafi had been received abroad. "People who criticize us simply don't know the real facts," M Dumas said.

The extreme care taken by the authorities to ensure that Mme Valente and Mr Houckins said nothing to the many journalists awaiting their return to France on Tuesday also suggests that some aspects of *Paffaire Silco* may still be kept under wraps.

A press conference called by members of their families in Paris yesterday failed to shed any significant light on the exact terms under which their release was negotiated.

The released hostages themselves are undergoing tests in a Paris hospital.

Hunt for killer in 3 nations

Bonn - A police hunt started yesterday in three countries after a convicted West German bank robber shot and killed a 42-year-old policeman at a motorway rest area near Aachen and then made off into Belgium with two pregnant taxi drivers as hostages (see Murray writes).

Having shaken off police pursuit, he drove to Liege, freeing both women unhurt in a small town south of the city, before disappearing. Police have identified him as Wolfgang Wendt, aged 40, convicted of two bank robberies and sentenced to three and a half years in prison in 1988.

Double hulls for tankers

New York - The Conoco company broke ranks with other world oil corporations yesterday and announced that it was ordering two new tankers built with double hulls designed to reduce the danger of oil spills like that of the Exxon Valdez last year (Charles Bremner writes).

In double hull tankers, both the sides and the bottom have inner and outer plates with a space between. The industry has been opposing attempts by the US Congress to require double hulls.

Barriers to beat seaweed

Rome - Italy is taking drastic steps to ensure that algae does not ruin the 1990 holiday season as it did the summer of 1989 (Paul Bompard writes). A newly formed Adriatic Authority is to anchor 20 miles of specially designed barriers in the Adriatic to repel the feared tide of rotting seaweed.

Surrealist soap hailed as a TV turning point

From Charles Bremner, New York

AMERICAN viewers have confounded the sceptics and turned in their tens of millions to a new prime-time soap opera that leaps so far beyond the reassuring traditional type that it is being hailed as a turning-point for US mass culture.

Launched by the ABC on Sunday night, *Twin Peaks*, a serialized drama directed by David Lynch, the avant-garde film-maker, is the most ambitious experiment so far by one of the old commercial networks in the battle to preserve their crumbling hold of the nation's television sets in "prime time", the peak and most lucrative viewing hours.

In Britain, where the off-beat such as *The Singing Detective* or *Monty Python* have always co-existed with more commonplace output, there would be little surprise over *Twin Peaks*, a subversive, Gothic melodrama that plays on the soap formula observed from *Peyton Place* to *Dynasty*. In the multi-billion dollar stakes for US viewership tinkering with the formula amounts to heresy.

The ratings for Sunday's opening broadcast showed that 33 per cent of the viewing audience tuned in - by far the top figure for any programme that night. However, the networks and advertising business are waiting to see how many people stick with it.

Twin Peaks is strange by any standards. Lynch, who was acclaimed for films such as *Elephant Man*, *Dune* and *Blue Velvet*, starts with all the comforting clichés, showing an imaginary sawmill town in the remote Pacific North-west reacting to a murder in its midst. Gradually the characters, from the sheriff to the

FBI man and the greedy factory owner, slip out of normality.

A tough, burly policeman begins weeping uncontrollably at the sight of a body. "Would you leave us please," the FBI man asks a morgue attendant. The man replies: "My name's Jim." The narrative then dislocates into a moody surreal fantasy, more in keeping with a European art house film.

The question exercising the industry is whether the viewing millions will take to such a deviant satire in enough numbers to eschew the sports, police shows and situation comedies that usually rule the middle evening.

The mass-market press has been preparing the audience for weeks with primers on the bizarre visions of Lynch. "You are in for a treat or a trauma, maybe both," said *USA Today* in an attempt to explain that there is no indication whether they are meant to laugh or cry or even understand it. The critics have spared few superlatives on the



David Lynch: Acclaimed for his avant-garde films

quality of *Twin Peaks*, defined by one as an "existential *Peyton Place*". It is being hailed as historic, a breakthrough and a cultural turning point.

Mr Robert Igen, president of ABC entertainment, says the experiment is "a case of a network having the desire and guts to try different television forms... and the feel of this programme is unlike that of any other programme on TV".

Not all the critics, however, were enraptured by the new series. Tony Kornheiser, a columnist with *The Washington Post*, called it "so strange and icy and meandering I was surprised it wasn't in Swedish. I know this is supposed to be the best television show of all time. I just think it started a little slowly".

The sudden creative spirit among the old conglomerates is a response to the inroads being carved by the newer rivals. In 1979, 97 per cent of television viewers tuned to ABC, NBC and CBS. By last year the number had dropped to 67 per cent - nearly 60 per cent of US households now watch cable television and two in three have video recorders. This, some experts say, will force the networks to abandon broadcasting to the widest mass in favour of "narrow-casting" to particular demographic groups.

But not all the recent changes are the product of a new appreciation of wit and creative quality. The nation's couch potatoes are lapping up the surprise hit of the year - *America's Funniest Home Videos*. This compilation of home-video films sent in by the public has jumped into the top half dozen shows in the prime-time war.

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Romanians ask exiled King to delay visit

From Tim Judah, Bucharest and Alan McGregor, Geneva

THE visit of exiled King Michael of Romania hung in the balance last night as the Bucharest Government appealed for him to postpone his trip until after Romania's general elections on May 20.

A statement said that: "The visit and the publicity around it are seen as a political gesture of a nature to bring unwanted elements into the election campaign, fan new passion, and violence may occur. Therefore the obvious danger has emerged that the ex-king become unintentionally involved in obscure manipulations that may affect his dignity."

But King Michael's secretary said yesterday: "Everything stands, as arranged, and the king's daughter, the exiled Princess Margherita, also said: 'The trip is still on, as arranged.' The king was not available for personal comment."

King Michael, who lives in Switzerland and travels on a British passport was due to arrive at Bucharest airport this afternoon on what would be his first visit home since his enforced abdication in 1947. Mr Salva Brucan, a senior advisor to the National Salva-

tion Front which dominates the Romanian Government said: "Since the king doesn't live here he's not aware of the political situation. There are only some very small parties in favour of his visit and they want to make publicity out of it."

The Government statement also urged the exiled king to postpone his visit because, it said: "In the present condition in which various extremist groups openly urge violence, it is ever more obvious that the ex-king's visit in this period is of a nature to exacerbate the existing conflict and put his personal safety in danger."

Mr Brucan said the Government did not fear that King Michael might be assassinated, but that "even a hostile reception is enough for a king". He said the Government regarded this as a problem, "because we've hardly succeeded in calming things down after the events of Targu Mures", referring to last month's violent clashes between ethnic Hungarians and Romanians in Transylvania.

The Romanian Government's appeal to the exiled king means that both the National Salvation Front and



Princess Elena, daughter of the exiled King Michael of Romania, distributing gifts at a Bucharest orphanage

the main opposition parties are in a rare state of agreement. Last weekend Mr Radu Campeanu, the leader of the National Liberal Party appealed to King Michael to postpone his visit. Privately top officials of the National Peasant Party also admit that they are against the trip.

In fact, all the major political sources regard the issue of the monarchy as something of an irrelevance, although the two main opposition parties have called for a referendum, after the elections, on its

restoration. A recent *Paris Match* poll of 817 people in Bucharest found that 78 per cent of those asked would be against it.

Meanwhile, officials in King Michael's Bucharest office said that they were unconcerned by the government's statement and that the visit was still on. They said that they did not fear for the ex-king's safety nor were they afraid that he would be refused entry at Bucharest's Otopeni airport.

Yesterday evening Mr

Brucan said that he "didn't know" if the king would be turned back if he still attempted to come.

A spokesman for the king and his family said on April 4 that their intention was to make "a private visit, a couple of weeks".

King Michael, aged 68, was to be accompanied by his wife, Anne, 64, and three of their five daughters. The eldest, Margherita, aged 42, and one of her sisters, visited Bucharest last month.

Detailed arrangements for

the visit were made in Bucharest by a woman friend of the family who went there earlier this month. A family spokeswoman described her as "one of the outstanding and dedicated people who have taken Romania to their hearts - many friends have rallied round to help and support us in these extraordinary times."

King Michael was forced to abdicate by the Communists in 1947. In exile he has worked for Lear Jet, in the electronics industry and as a stockbroker.

Critics pillory Waleśa for 'craving power'

From A Correspondent, Warsaw

Mr Lech Waleśa, the Solidarity leader, insisted yesterday that his decision to run for president does not stem from a craving for power but from the need to help Poland in speeding its reforms.

But there are those who think differently - beginning with the former Communist Party. Its newspaper printed a cartoon of Mr Waleśa wearing Napoleon's hat and preening before a mirror at Belvedere Palace where the current President and former party leader, Mr Wojciech Jaruzelski, resides.

Through leaked information to reporters on the eve of President Jaruzelski's visit to Moscow, Mr Waleśa let it be known he will run for state president "in the next elections" - which would be as early as next year despite the fact that Mr Jaruzelski's term does not expire until 1995.

"I want to help Poland in its reforms but not to take over power," Mr Waleśa told reporters in Gdansk after talks with the Czechoslovak Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Jan Carnogursky.

Mr Carnogursky, who speaks fluent Polish, said he endorsed Mr Waleśa. "If I were Polish, I would vote for Waleśa as president," he said.

But some intellectuals are concerned that Mr Waleśa - whose stewardship of the Solidarity Union has been called dictatorial by his critics, and who is not known to mince words - is not the right man for this sensitive job.

"Why can't Waleśa just be Waleśa?" asked one Solidarity supporter who believes the gruff, down-to-earth electrician is better suited to keeping the population in line in his current role.

Mr Waleśa is probably feeling a little isolated these days in Gdansk, especially after turning down opportunities to be either President or Prime Minister last year in the hectic days after Solidarity's overwhelming - and totally unexpected - landslide election victory.

His hand-picked Prime Minister, Mr Tadeusz Mazowiecki, made it clear early on that while both shared the ideals of Solidarity, he would be his own man - to the point of ignoring Mr Waleśa's advice on how to choose his cabinet.

Then in December Mr Waleśa's Czechoslovak counterpart, the dissident playwright and essayist Vaclav Havel, was propelled into the presidency - and the international spotlight - by that country's revolution

against the Communist monopoly.

Perhaps Mr Waleśa was piqued when a jubilant Havel returned in mid-February from a triumphant visit to the United States to Prague declaring Czechoslovakia was now "America's favorite country". For the following week, the Solidarity chief snubbed the Czechoslovak President when he visited Poland, claiming he was too tied up to meet him.

Mr Waleśa was also critical of Mr Havel's offer at the time to President Bush and Soviet President Gorbachev to hold their next summit in Prague. "He's playing with images, but these images may be needed by Havel," he snapped. "He doesn't have reforms."

This wasn't the first time Mr Waleśa has suggested he covets the presidency. On January 8, while commenting on the Mazowiecki Government's tough new austerity measures, he suggested Poles might revolt and if that were the case, "I would take the job temporarily so that a tragedy does not occur." But there was apparently a specific reason for his decision to leak the news of his candidacy on Monday, the eve of an image-building visit by Mr Jaruzelski to Moscow.

Mr Jaruzelski was always the closest Communist to Mr Gorbachev of the now fallen East bloc leaders in age and temperament. For example, they both agree that a united Germany should remain neutral - while the Polish Government is open to the idea of both Germanies in Nato.



Mr Waleśa: Feeling out in the cold after election

National fervour engulfs Croatia

From Richard Bassett, Zagreb

SAVIOUR of Austria and implacable foe of Hungarians and Serbs, Ban Jellacic, Vice-roy of Croatia, has returned to Zagreb.

The vast equestrian statue of the Ban (Governor) who in 1848 saved the Austrian Empire and whose sword was always pointed towards Hungary when not directed towards the south, is to be restored to its position on Zagreb's main square, 43 years after Communists banished it.

Jellacic, a Croat version of Wellington-cum-Tennyson, was removed by the Communists, who also renamed Jellacic Square.

Now, less than two weeks before Croats vote in their first free elections since before the war, a wave of nationalist fervour has engulfed this republic which has long felt itself repressed by Belgrade and Serbia.

"You see, Croatia was for centuries part of the Austrian Empire. We belong to Europe, not to the Balkans," said Mr Franjo Tudjman, a former partisan general who now heads the most popular party in Croatia, the Croat Democratic Front.

The front is expected to win the elections outright. Unlike Slovenia, which voted last weekend, Croatia has no strong Communist candidates. The front's main opponents, a coalition of opposition parties led by the formidable Mrs Savka Dabovic, is badly organized and lacks funds.

On the other hand, Mr Tudjman's offices whirl with the noise of computers and faxes. In one room Croats exiles from Canada and Australia translate policy documents. In another, a grim poster advertises a new book describing the massacre of Croats by Serbs after the war in Corinthia.

Old skeletons which even the repressive apparatus of the late Marshal Tito barely managed to keep locked in their cupboards are now emerging, fuelled by the Croats' desire to see themselves once again as a nation. Ironically, as with the

Slovenes, this desire has been encouraged by Serbian attacks on Croatia led by Mr Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian leader, which has led to the resurrection of some ideas which most Yugoslavs find ominous.

The Croat Nazi-puppet state of Ante Pavelic - "the only time Croatia was free", some of Mr Tudjman's helpers claim - is being given an ill-deserved respectability.

Mr Tudjman denies, however, that his party is anti-semitic or extremist.

"I am against all violence. The future of Croatia will be decided after the elections by the Croats in Parliament not by me," he says with the easy-going manner of a typical member of Zagreb's highly cultivated Central European bourgeoisie.

But Mr Tudjman's tone belies the force of the emotions which run within his party. By claiming not just the Croat crown lands of Dalmatia and Slavonia but also Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mr Tudjman has inflamed emotions. When he addressed a rally in the Dalmatian village of Benkovac, a Serb fanatic tried to assassinate him.

"There have been many attempts since. Unfortunately I must travel with a bodyguard," he says.

● BELGRADE: The armed forces have filed criminal charges against Mr Jozo Pucnik, one of the two candidates in the run-off election for the Slovene presidency, for allegedly slandering their reputation. Tanjug, the state news agency, said yesterday (AP reports).

Colonel Vuk Obradovic, press spokesman for the Army, told a news conference that the Army felt insulted by Mr Pucnik's alleged remarks that the armed forces "are not capable of defending the country from external enemies".

Tanjug said that Mr Pucnik also claimed that the Army was "killing our children, poisoning our economy and imperiling our freedom".

Mr Pucnik could not be immediately reached for comment.

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Moscow 'stalling' on arms talks for deal on Germany

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

PRESIDENT Gorbachev may have decided to stall all conventional and strategic nuclear arms talks in order to put pressure on the West to compromise over the future status of a reunified Germany.

This is one of a number of theories being put forward by senior Western diplomats for the confused signals emanating from Moscow recently.

With new problems, some of them quite unexpected, arising in both the Conventional Forces in Europe talks in Vienna and the strategic missile negotiations in Geneva, the sense of growing optimism in the West over imminent arms control agreements has been dealt a blow.

Now Moscow is introducing different ideas about German reunification, the latest being that the united country could be a member of both Nato and the Warsaw Pact for a five-to-seven year transitional period. Mr Valentin Fatin, chief of the

international department of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee and a former ambassador to West Germany, said this week: "The idea that for a certain time a unified Germany could remain with its Western part in Nato and its Eastern part in the Warsaw Pact would probably be acceptable to our side."

This was another way of reminding the Western alliance that Moscow could not accept a reunified Germany as a fully paid-up member of Nato — despite support for this concept from the majority of her East European allies, especially Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and now East Germany.

The timing of the latest proposal for dual membership is crucial because the first real negotiations on German reunification under the "two-plus-four" formula are to be held between officials from

the Soviet Union, the US, Britain, France and the two Germanys later this month.

But is there a link between the new line adopted by Moscow at the Vienna and Geneva talks, and its demands concerning Germany's future status? The different responses to that question from European capitals underline the confusion Moscow has caused.

Senior French diplomats suggested that Mr Gorbachev had been forced into a corner by the West's insistence that Germany must remain in Nato. Acknowledging that the Soviet leader had no real cards to play — he has, after all, stated that the two Germanys should be allowed to decide their future — they said his only tactic was to play tough at the arms control talks.

Mr Gorbachev wanted agreements as much as the West but his priority was to see that Nato did not get its own way over Germany. He cannot be seen to be giving in to Western pressure, particularly since the Soviet military is already unhappy about some of the arms control positions adopted by Moscow.

One senior French diplomat said Western governments had been "carrying on" as if convinced that Moscow would eventually cave-in on the issue. There had been an unrealistic sense of optimism that all would come right in the end, he said.

Some West German diplomats are also concerned that Nato has overplayed its hand. "We should not go on making public statements about Germany remaining in Nato," one German diplomatic source said. "We should recognize that Gorbachev is facing difficulties over this issue."

General Wolfgang Altenburg, chairman of Nato's Military Committee until his retirement last year, supported this view yesterday. He said: "This issue has got to be treated in a most sensitive way. One big mistake already made (by the Bonn Government) was to indicate that (West) German troops could go into the GDR (East Germany)."

He believed that statement had contributed to Moscow's reluctance to accept Nato membership for a united Germany.

British officials, however, are more sceptical that Mr Gorbachev is deliberately using delaying tactics in Vienna and Geneva as a bargaining chip for resolving Germany's future security status.

One senior British diplomat said: "I think the Moscow bureaucracy is now addressing this issue and coming up with a number of ideas. The latest one on dual membership is not a solution but just an option."

He added: "Rather than creating complications they may just be searching for enlightenment."

The British view is that it was right to emphasize that a united Germany should be a member of Nato. Chancellor Helmut Kohl, the West German leader, had made it clear from the very beginning that that was what he wanted.

"If you don't lay down some ground rules, principles can get eroded very quickly; it's the slippery slope," one British source said.

Armenian militants shell Azerbaijan enclave



The Esayev family surveying the ruins of their home at Sadarak in the Azerbaijani enclave of Nakhichevan after it was shelled by Armenian militants. Demonstrators protesting about the deaths of 20 Georgians stormed the government building in Yerevan on Monday

Hurd rejects Soviet idea of dual defence role

From Michael Binyon, Moscow

MR DOUGLAS Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, rejected a Soviet suggestion that a united Germany should hold "dual membership" of Nato and the Warsaw Pact.

It would make it almost impossible for a German defence minister to do his job, he said.

The idea had been outlined by Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister,

in an article reported by *The Times* yesterday and spelt out in detail to Mr Hurd during the meeting between the two ministers in Moscow on Tuesday.

Concluding two days of intensive talks, Mr Hurd also said President Gorbachev had implicitly ruled out any economic blockade of Lithuania, and had repeatedly insisted he would do everything possible to settle the crisis by discussion.

But Mr Hurd had urged the

Soviet leader to grant a free flow of news from Lithuania by allowing Western correspondents to continue working there.

On the German question, Mr Hurd said Moscow was searching for a third way that would not necessarily commit a united Germany to full membership of Nato. German unification raised many security questions, President Gorbachev had said during their meeting on Tuesday.

Mr Hurd said the West

should take account of Soviet security concerns.

It should look actively at ways of broadening the Helsinki structure to satisfy not only Soviet concerns, but also the fears of other East European countries of a strong and united Germany.

Both Britain and the Soviet Union had important roles in working out the external aspects of German unification.

Britain did not expect Soviet troops to leave East Germany immediately, said

Mr Hurd. "There is no question of bundling the Soviet troops out; there will have to be a substantial transition period."

The Foreign Secretary also insisted that all the key diplomatic decisions facing Europe this year were linked: the "two-plus-four" talks on Germany, the Conventional Forces in Europe talks in Vienna, and the autumn summit of the 35 signatories to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Communists on brink of split

From Michael Binyon, Moscow

A FORMAL split in the Soviet Communist Party drew closer yesterday after a leader of a radical group within the party demanded that it set up as an independent social democratic party, cutting all links with the communists.

Mr Igor Chubais, leader of the Democratic Platform of Liberals, rejected attacks on his group published in an open letter to the Central Committee by the powerful conservative faction led by Mr Jgor Ligachov, the Politburo member.

Mr Chubais called on fellow liberals to leave the party, stop paying their dues and set themselves up as a separate reformist group.

The conservatives, denouncing the Democratic Platform, called for their expulsion in a letter prominently carried in *Pravda* yesterday and read out on television.

"They accused the group of splitting the party back into a loose association of factions and groupings. The time has come to decide what to do about those who put themselves outside the party. How can they stay in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union?" the letter asked.

Mr Vyacheslav Shostakovsky, one of the leaders of the Democratic Platform and rector of the influential Higher Party School, yesterday described the letter as an attempt to restrict political discussion in the run-up to the congress.

"The supporters of the Democratic Platform have no intention of waging a fight against the party. Our goal is a democratic renewal of the party aimed at adapting it to a multi-party system. We are making every effort to democratize the party because we believe that at present it has lost broad ties with the people," he said.

But Mr Ligachov had bitterly criticized President Gorbachev's tolerance of radicals, and demanded their immediate expulsion.

Mr Gorbachev admitted on

Tuesday that his reforms could split the party, and said the Central Committee would publish an appeal to members to unite. But he denied that he was trying to purge the party either of conservatives or of radicals. "Those who disagree with party policies should leave its ranks themselves."

A split would leave the party in disarray before the congress on July 3.

Mr Gorbachev may try to exploit the situation to push ahead with radical reform, especially of the economy, which has been bitterly attacked by the conservatives.

But he appears to be ignoring this latest challenge from Mr Ligachov, as he has effectively shunted the entire Politburo into the wings and stripped them of any real decision-making powers.

The conservatives have been also challenged by the staff of the *Liters Pamyat* newspaper, who have sent an open letter to Mr Gorbachev calling for the rehabilitation of Mr Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the writer now living in exile in the United States.

The letter published yesterday in the newspaper said Mr Solzhenitsyn was "forcibly and illegally expelled from the country and denied the possibility of defending himself". Mr Solzhenitsyn is one of the last major dissidents who has yet to be rehabilitated.

● TALLINN: The Estonian Supreme Soviet yesterday rejected Mr Gorbachev's demand that it retract its moves towards independence, and called for urgent negotiations with Moscow (writes Anatol Lieven).

The deputies also began the process of cancelling the legal obligation of Estonians to serve in the Soviet army.

The telegram to Mr Gorbachev said Estonia justified the Supreme Soviet's measures — of March 30, establishing a "period of transition" to full independence, and suspending the Soviet Constitution.

London hearing for poet of Estonian nationalism

By Alan Franks

Today's poetry reading by the Estonian author Jaan Kaplinski at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London could hardly come at a more opportune moment.

For Kaplinski's scheduled appearance in the opening programme of the ICA's East European Forum, which was launched by President Havel of Czechoslovakia during his visit to Britain last month, coincides with the upsurge of international interest in the progress of his own homeland towards independence.

Tension in Tallinn, capital of this tiny, westernmost outpost of non-western ethos, has risen dramatically in the wake of President Gorbachev's warning last week to President Arnold Rütel, the new head of the Estonian Supreme Soviet, that unless the Baltic republic retreated from its position, it would be treated in the same way as Lithuania.

Kaplinski was born 49 years ago, in the year of the German occupation, the son of an Estonian mother and a Polish father who disappeared into the Soviet labour camps while the Soviet Union itself, as of the individual power holders in our country. Occasionally it seemed funny to me that they (the censors) should pick around among my words for some subversive meaning, like mice picking around among grains on the floor."



books of verse, innumerable essays and a few plays which he disposes, he has become the nearest thing Estonia has to a national poet.

His speech is shot through with pictures of childhood, dependence and authority. He has a solid, tranquil presence, with a face entirely framed by silver hair, and the barest minimum of hand movements to underline the cadences. As a formidable linguist and translator, he has had the chance to travel more widely than many of his

countrymen, although this is his first visit to Britain. He has arrived here from the States, for which he finds it hard to express warmth. His friends detect in him elements of good old-fashioned European snobbery, and the sense that to be in Tallinn or Tartu, even today, with all the Soviet dilutions, is almost to be in Europe as it was at the beginning of the century.

"The Soviets are supposed to have been the ones in charge," he says. "And yet the Estonian people are more adult than they. We did not have so much fear of the Soviet Union itself, as of the individual power holders in our country. Occasionally it seemed funny to me that they (the censors) should pick around among my words for some subversive meaning, like mice picking around among grains on the floor."

The ambiguities of his work, he agrees, have been felt by his readers as well as his censors; in times of uncertainty or poor morale they looked for some affirmation of their nationalist ideas, even if it was only cryptic.

Jaan Kaplinski reads at the ICA today at 1.00 pm. His volume of poetry, *The Same Sea In Us All*, is published by Collins Harvill (£6.95)

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Get on top of tomorrow

Feminist challenges millionaire cowboy in battle for Texas

From Susan Ellicott, Washington

ONE of the dirtiest political campaigns in the history of Texas, a largely right-leaning state which prides itself on its *bragadocio*, has ended with the rare nomination of a woman as the Democratic candidate for governor.

Mrs Ann Richards, the state's treasurer who shot to fame in 1988 by ridiculing the presidential aspirations of Mr George Bush, faces a tough ride against the Republican nominee, Mr Clayton Williams, a millionaire cowboy who has pledged to restore the "Texas of his father" and run the state like his ranch.

The silver-haired grandmother, aged 56, who describes herself as a feminist, defeated her closest rival, Mr Jim Mattox, the state's Attorney General, by at least 10 percentage points to become the first female nominee since 1932.

For many Texans, however, there was little to cheer about. The gubernatorial campaign, especially in the past four weeks of the Democratic run-off, unleashed a wave of nastiness that deterred an overwhelming majority from even casting their ballot. Voting turnout was estimated at 16 per cent. So appalled was *The Houston Post* at the dirty tactics of Mrs Richards and her closest rival, Mr Mattox, that it refused to endorse either on the ground that they had embarrassed Texans.

In a state that owes its economic success to oil-drilling and the industry of dirt farmers, many Texans, beneath their bravado, are sen-

sitive to a perception among "old-money" Americans that they are little more than *nouveaux riches* with glitzy shopping malls, fast cars and no taste.

Many political analysts have also suggested that the Democratic run-off reveals all that is most unsavoury about contemporary US politics — the high cost of running, the dominance of slick television advertising, negative campaigning and a failure to address serious issues.

Despite its affluence, Texas remains a state struggling to cope with poverty along the US-Mexican border and growing Hispanic immigration. From the start, candidates sparred over who had presided over more executions in the state. Their boasts were so gory that they were lampooned on America's equivalent of *Spitting Image*. Voters

were disgusted, especially as the candidates had vowed not to resort to bashing one another.

The most bitter stage erupted after a refusal by Mrs Richards, a reformed alcoholic, to answer questions about drug use. She retaliated by saying she had been dry for 10 years, but doubted the financial ethics of Mr Mattox during the same period.

In past weeks, the advertising agency working for Mr Mattox ran a barrage of short television clips which suggested, by innuendo, that Mrs Richards' silence was an admission of guilt. Her counter-attack included a television spot showing a cartoon of Mr Mattox throwing fistfuls of mud at a poster of Mrs Richards.

Texasans are faced, at best, with a brief respite from this nastiness. Mr Williams, the Republican nominee, has spent an estimated \$6 million on his first political campaign. Mrs Richards almost went broke during her race and may have to rely on her acerbic tongue to defeat her opponent.

Mr Williams is an old-style Texan who appeals to those who knew the state during its heyday when world demand for oil was high. His "I'm just a country boy made good" message has charmed voters even though his critics wrote him off as inexperienced.

He has promised the campaign from now on will be clean, although few believe him. "Read my lips," he said, borrowing a phrase from Mr Bush. "No more mud."



Mrs Richards: Victorious as Democratic candidate



Schoolgirls taking part in a rally in Kathmandu to mark the reopening of schools closed because of violence

Nepal's parties step up pressure on King

From Christopher Thomas Kathmandu

NEPAL'S newly legalized political parties are threatening to launch a fresh wave of mass demonstrations "within days" unless King Birendra agrees to far-reaching constitutional changes.

The Nepali Congress, the biggest party, has adopted hardline policies that include demands for the removal of virtually all the King's powers and the immediate dismissal of the present Government, which supports him.

Mr Gurja Prasad Koirala, general secretary of the Congress, said that the people were impatient for change. If the Royal Palace did not soon give ground, protests would erupt again, and "this time they will be aimed directly at the King".

He insisted that Congress was not opposed to the institution of the monarchy, "but the King must become a British-style monarch. The people will settle for nothing less. The protest movement has been suspended, not wound up, and unless our demands are met there will be more trouble."

The Congress wants even the 4,000 local *panchayats* (councils) to be dissolved, a move that those who support the King say would leave the country in a power vacuum. Most politicians argue that the system is so corrupt the people would be better off without it.

The resumption of party politics in Nepal is proving to be chaotic and confrontational, with tensions rising between Congress and its pro-democracy allies, the communists. Moderate voices are being swept away in the rush for power — power that rests with the King at present.

King Birendra replaced his Cabinet recently and it now consists of just four ministers. The Palace says the vacant positions are waiting to be filled by Congress and communist members.

But Congress is demanding that the four palace-appointed ministers, who include the Prime Minister, should be dismissed before its politicians take up any portfolios. It says the Prime Minister must be a Congress member but that pro-King loyalists can hold some Cabinet posts.

While the arguments continue, Nepal is left without national leadership and is being run from day to day by the bureaucracy.

Since political parties were legalized last Sunday, some heads of government departments have posted notices in their offices saying that public employees should remain politically neutral under the multi-party system.

The Nepali Congress has now reopened its rundown office in the centre of Kathmandu which was forced to close in February in a government clamp-down. The roof was packed with revelers as the red party flag flapped in the wind. Inside, old filing cabinets and second-hand furniture were put in place. The office boasts one telephone.

Senior party officials said that if the King dismissed the Government, an interim Cabinet could be in place within days, and a serious confrontation with the palace would be avoided.

Congress and the communists met last night to coordinate their strategies and to agree immediate policy objectives. The emphasis was firmly on persuading King Birendra to dismiss his Government and to relinquish most of his powers under a new constitution.

Congress dallies as Rio queues

From Louise Byrne, Rio de Janeiro

BRAZILIANS who can still claim to have a sense of humour intact after the bruising new austerity measures recently imposed on the economy describe their predicament as "esperstroika".

It is not meant as a tribute to President Fernando Collor de Mello's statesmanship, but rather a reference to the Portuguese word for queuing — *espera* — which Brazilians are doing these days as much as the long-suffering Russian consumer.

One of the most popular "esperstroika" jokes, which

has also made its way from the Soviet Union, is of a man who, waiting in a never-ending bank queue, finally loses his patience and storms off vowing to kill the President for all the trouble he is causing. When the customer sheepishly reappears at the bank the next day, he is asked why he failed in his mission. "The queue was longer than this one," he replies.

For more than a week now, Congress has been voting on the sweeping economic reforms boldly announced by the young President Collor

when he took office in March. The deadline for passing the measures falls this week. While the population continues to suffer the consequences of the plans, which took effect before Congress even began discussing them, the politicians are taking their time over the most polemic issues.

The strongest opposition is reserved for the measure which froze overnight all current and savings bank accounts above £550.

In doing this, the new Government hoped to with-

draw enough money from circulation to bring down consumption and hence inflation. However, the measure, together with another which froze money markets accounts, is now causing serious problems for Brazil's industrial sector. More than 28,000 workers have been laid off already and thousands more sent home on paid leave as the country hovers on the edge of recession.

The new plan has predictably become a crucial test for President Collor. For the first time he not only faces the full force of a Congress where his support is limited, but is also threatened with a decline in public support as recession threatens and the administrative problems of the plan increase.

"Unfortunately, the measures were not explained very well to the population and early mismanagement of the plan has led to hardship," said a political analyst, Senator Sergio Abrantes. Queues, which stretch for their longest at the banks, have now become a part of everyday life.

Most Brazilians, however, are in no financial position to stand in any bank queue and the plan, which has accomplished its aim of hitting Brazil's 10 per cent richest people, still holds popular support.

"The trap of unemployment has yet to hit. For the moment the lowering of inflation is what has impressed the poor most," said Senator Abrantes. Inflation for April is likely to be near nil after a month in which it rose to 85 per cent.

However, whether it can be kept low will partly depend on the way Congress votes this week on the crucial measures. Senator Collor still insists the essence of the plan must be left untouched, and Congress is likely to give the new Government the benefit of the doubt and the country's economy a desperate chance.

Meanwhile, Senator Collor's electoral campaign pledge to slash public spending has also started. Congress has approved the closing of 24 state institutes and companies and the new Government has announced a "day of the people" for May, when 900 government cars will be put up for auction.

Also to be sold are thousands of apartments occupied by civil servants in Brasilia, and hundreds of items kept in stock to supply them, including thousands of ovens, refrigerators, fire extinguishers, door locks and even paving blocks.

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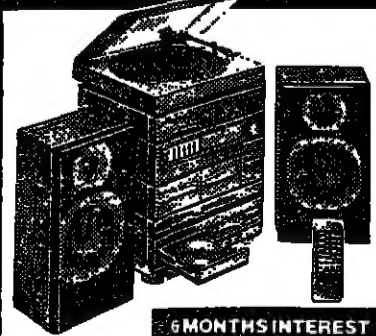
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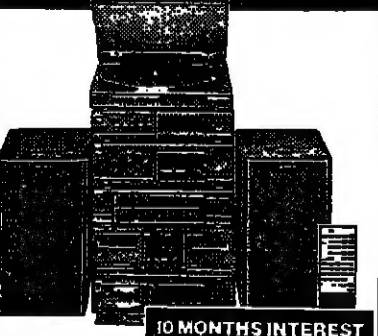
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Greece's new leader warns of deep crisis

From Chris Eiles Athens

Athanasios Kanellopoulos, a veteran conservative.

CONSERVATIVES returned to power in Greece yesterday with a warning from Mr Constantine Mitsotakis, the new Prime Minister, that the country is going through a deep crisis.

His New Democracy Government — in control again after eight years in opposition and a further 10 months in transitional Cabinets — contains 27 ministers and 11 under-secretaries.

The Foreign Ministry went to Mr Antonis Samaras, aged 39, a rising star in the party, while Mr Mitsotakis went outside Parliament in selecting Mr Ioannis Paleokrassas, his election campaign manager, as Minister of Finance.

Mr Miltiades Evert, a former Athens Mayor and heir-apparent to Mr Mitsotakis, got the prestigious Ministry of the Prime Minister's Office overseeing all other ministries and the Civil Service.

Mr Tzannis Tzannetakis, the former Prime Minister, became Culture Minister and one of the two Deputy Prime Ministers, the other being Mr

The Cabinet:
Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis; Deputy Prime Ministers Athanasios Kanellopoulos, Tzannis Tzannetakis; Minister of the Prime Minister's Office Miltiades Evert; National Defence Ioannis Varvatis; Foreign Affairs Antonis Samaras; Interior Sotiris Kourvelas; National Economy George Sofianis; Finance Ioannis Paleokrassas; Agriculture Athanasios Kanellopoulos; Labour Aristides Katsikas; Health, Welfare and Social Security Marietta Panagiotou; Justice Athanasios Kanellopoulos; Education and Religious Affairs Vasilis Kondoyannopoulos; Culture Tzannis Tzannetakis; Public Order Ioannis Varvatis; Macedonia and Thrace George Tzioukostas; Aegean Islands George Mitsotakis; Environment, Town Planning and Public Works Stelios Manos; Industry, Energy and Technology Stavros Dimas; Commerce Aristotelis Karabas; Transport and Communications Nikolaos Gekas; Merchant Marine Constantine Mitsotakis; Tourism George Sofianis; Welfare Petros Kallias; Theodoros
Alternate Ministers with cabinet rank: Foreign Affairs Efstathios Christodoulou; National Defence Alexandros Pappadopoulos; Aegean Islands George Mitsotakis; Environment, Town Planning and Public Works Athanasios Karamanlis; Commerce Sotiris Hatziakakis; Health and Welfare Sotiris Hatziakakis; Agriculture Panagiotis Hatziakakis.

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Humble protector of the children of God

MOTHER Teresa, everyone's idea of a living saint, has at last stood down as head of the Missionaries of Charity order she founded 40 years ago to care for "the poorest of the poor" in the streets of Calcutta.

She has since developed it into a world-wide movement of exemplary charity, and her name has become an international household word. Indeed, it has become a regular game among opinion pollsters to measure Mother Teresa's popularity against other internationally-known women, and in every such poll there emerges a curious rivalry in the public mind between her and Mrs Thatcher.

Gallan, in an international poll in 1987, placed the British Prime Minister first and the Queen third, with Mother Teresa, previously top, between them. Mother Teresa met Mrs Thatcher in April 1988 - whether either of them were aware that they were the two most famous women in the world is not recorded.

She said of Mrs Thatcher "she is wonderful" after meeting her at Downing Street, shortly after visiting the "cardboard city" created by homeless people at Charing Cross Station and the Royal Festival Hall. The Prime Minister had promised her she would do everything in her power for these down-and-outs, she said, a discussion previously reported by a Downing Street spokesman later as Mrs Thatcher simply telling her of the work being done for them by various charitable bodies. Nevertheless, there was a strong im-

Mother Teresa, the nun who became a worldwide symbol of charity, has been forced by ill health to give up her work with the sick and dying. Clifford Longley, Religious Affairs Editor, assesses her life of devotion

pression among observers of the meeting that the two women, for all their enormous differences, did connect.

But the following year Mother Teresa complained about the lack of response to her visit. Without naming the Prime Minister, she remarked in an interview with *Women's Own*: "I talked to the highest people, but nothing has happened. A number of people promised to do something but we have no home. That is what worries me sometimes. I wonder what I have to do to get it done."

Mother Teresa had been moved to tears by her encounter with the communities of social outcasts in central London. "It hurt me so much to see our people in the terrible cold with just a bit of cardboard covering them," she said. The phrase "our people" is a characteristic Teresa touch - the poor are always "we" with her.

The people she met "were inside cardboard boxes made like a little coffin," Mother Teresa added. "I didn't know what to say... my eyes filled with tears. There was one man who told me it had been a long, long time since anyone had held his hand. It was very painful and very sad to see him and many other people like him. They are unwanted, unloved, and uncared for."

What is perhaps most remarkable of all about Mother Teresa is that she has the ability to communicate complete sincerity, even when doing and saying things which would be embarrassing in the hand or mouth of others. Many of those who have visited her, either in Calcutta or at another of her homes for the homeless, have reported being reduced to tears by the sight of her cradling in her arms the emaciated body of a sick and dying man. Few women have such a gift of unselfconsciousness, or show such lack of fear.

Charity is so often felt to be cold that the experience of seeing and feeling it at fever pitch is unsettling, even sometimes shattering. Mr Malcolm Muggeridge, a cultivator of cynicism if ever there was one, was converted to Catholicism by it. All over the world there are tens of thousands of so-called "co-workers" of the Missionaries of Charity - ordinary lay people who give part of their time and money to the causes Mother Teresa promotes. Yet behind her there is no slick PR operation, no back-up team of suited men. She moves around the globe either alone or in company with just a few of her white-robed sisters, with total lack of ostentation, carrying their own bags. Few people can ever have been so totally

indifferent to all the things the mass of mankind finds so important.

Her headquarters in Calcutta are in an inconspicuous building at 54A Lower Circular Road, marked by nothing more than small sign saying "Mother Teresa MC". Those who have visited it report a strong smell of disinfectant and the sound of constant scrubbing.

Mother Teresa, who is 79, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. Last September she was taken to hospital in Calcutta with chest pains. For a time it was feared she might die, but within three weeks she was reported to be back at her desk, handling paperwork for five hours a day. In November she was readmitted, suffering from severe giddiness, as a heart pacemaker operation.

Her Calcutta home-for-the-homeless has handled more than 50,000 patients since 1952, very few of whom are Christians. More than half recover, and volunteer doctors, of every faith and none, staff a medical team to treat them. There is no effort to convert them. Mother Teresa described her purpose simply as "picking up the sick and dying from the streets and helping them to die with love and dignity as children of God".

The Missionaries of Charity are today represented in virtually all Western countries. Britain included. In recent years the order has turned its attention to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union; and after the Armenian earthquake - appropriately enough, as Mother Teresa is of Armenian birth - the order became the first religious body to be allowed to operate with full approval of the Soviet authorities.



Mother Teresa, who has stood down as head of the Missionaries of Charity order

Health risk may force shutdown of airport

Madrid - Madrid airport may be closed for health reasons as rubbish and filth piles up in public areas because of a week-long cleaners' strike over pay (Harry Debelius writes). Pickets clashed yesterday with Red Cross and Civil Defence personnel trying to remove some of the rubbish. Restaurants at the airport were closed and cafeteria staff wore surgical masks to keep out dirt.

Soldier freed

Islamabad - A Soviet soldier held captive by Afghan rebels for nearly four years has been handed over to Soviet diplomats in Kabul by Afghan Government troops. (Reuters)

Tree protection

Vancouver - British Columbia is to introduce anti-logging legislation to preserve most of a remote Canadian valley containing the world's tallest spruce trees. (Reuters)

Kurds protest

Amsterdam - Police broke up a peaceful protest sit-in by ethnic Kurds at the Turkish Airlines office here over alleged repression of Kurds in Turkey. (AP)

Plea for writer

Moscow - The Soviet Writers' Union has asked President Gorbachev to restore Soviet nationality to the 1970 Nobel Literature prize winner Alexander Solzhenitsyn, now living in the US. (AFP)

Inflation down

Peking - China's imports and inflation plummeted in the first quarter of 1990 as the economy slowed dramatically, official figures show. (Reuters)

Mavericks trip weary Peres in final straight

From Richard Owen, Jerusalem

AFTER three weeks of complex bargaining, Mr Shimon Peres, the Labour Party leader, yesterday failed at the last bid to form a government.

He was, in fact, on his feet in the Knesset (Parliament) to announce his new coalition government and its programme of peace talks with the Palestinians when he discovered that the majority he had confidently predicted had slipped through his fingers.

Two of his allies, members of Agudat Israel, the ultra-orthodox religious party, had deserted him - apparently on the instructions of their spiritual mentor in distant New York - because they could not enter a government which was supported by Israeli Arab MPs with a policy based on withdrawal from the "sacred land" of the occupied territories.

The special session of the Knesset, convened in the middle of the Passover holiday, adjourned in uproar. "When you have written agreements on a coalition, but you get up in the morning to find that two of its members have changed their minds, what can you do?" a weary Mr Peres said afterwards.

Others noted that Likud, led by Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the caretaker Prime Minister, had been working hard to persuade Agudat Israel to forsake Labour. In view of the day's events, President Herzog gave Mr Peres a further two weeks in which to rebuild his coalition.

Labour sources said that if

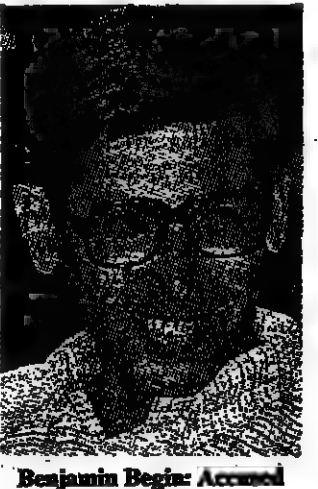
Mr Peres failed again, his job might be taken over by Mr Yitzhak Rabin, the Defence Minister in the collapsed Likud-Labour coalition.

The Knesset is perhaps the most unruly assembly in the world, partly because Israelis like to make themselves heard, and also because it faithfully reflects the bewildering diversity of opinions in the Jewish state.

Temper flared more than usual yesterday, possibly because of the hot desert wind, the *sharav* or *khamis*, which blows through Jerusalem at this time of year, setting teeth on edge.

The debate was a "disgrace", Mrs Sarah Doron, the leader of the Likud faction in the Knesset, declared. It was "democracy turned into farce", she added.

There was pandemonium in



Benjamin Begin: Accused Peres of deceiving Herzog

the chamber when Mrs Paula Cohen, a right-wing MP, accused the handful of Israeli Arab MPs of being the "agents of Arabism".

Mr Benjamin Begin, son of Menachem Begin, the former Prime Minister, added to the uproar when he accused Mr Peres of having "deceived" President Herzog by claiming to have a majority for a "peace platform" government.

Mr Peres's hopes of a 61-seat majority, one vote more than the Likud bloc, were boosted last week when Mr Avraham Shari, a discredited member of Likud, defected to Labour.

But any Israeli coalition depends on keeping together many disparate factions. When disputes within the religious parties again boiled to the surface yesterday, the results were disastrous for Mr Peres.

Rabbi Menachem Porush, the bearded, black-hatted leader of Agudat Israel's five MPs, seized the podium amid the uproar to declare that all five would honour their agreement to support Labour.

But the gloom on Labour faces told a different story; one of the five, Rabbi Avraham Vertiger, had announced already that he was resigning from the Knesset, while another, Rabbi Eliezer Mizrahi, said he was leaving the Agudat Israel faction while remaining an MP.

Both claimed that they were obeying instructions from the Lubavitcher Rebbe Menachem Schneerson, who lives in Brooklyn. The Yiddish-speaking Lubavitch sect (rebe is Yiddish for rabbi) broke away from mainstream Judaism in Eastern Europe two centuries ago.

Rebbe Schneerson is regarded by his followers as "charismatic", but other orthodox Jewish groups say he has "Messianic aspirations" and that the adulation he is accorded amounts to a heresy.

Politically he argues that Israel must never "give up an inch" of sacred land, an instruction which the Agudat Israel mavericks yesterday said they took to mean opposition to the Labour principle of trading "land for peace".

Secular Israelis, who make up well over half of the population, have expressed growing anger in the past few days over both the coalition horse-trading which arises from the power of minority parties, and the influence of the ultra-orthodox groups, which some say amounts to a Jewish "theocracy".

Last weekend more than 100,000 Israelis demonstrated to demand electoral reform. On Monday and Tuesday, in a related form of protest, thousands of Israelis crowded the beaches of Tel Aviv for Passover, blithely ignoring the strictures of the rabbis and eating pizza, ice-cream and other forbidden non-kosher foods.

None the less, Mr Peres was obliged yesterday to resume his courting of the orthodox parties, including both Agudat Israel and Shas, the party of Sephardi orthodox Jewry.

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Wages of sin in a gamble on oysters

From Christopher Walker, Cairo

AN ISLAMIC ruling against buying oysters on the off-chance that they might contain pearls has led to the enforced closure of one of the quaintest commercial centres in the Middle East: the colourful Shrawaith oyster market in oil-rich Kuwait.

Al-Qabas, the Kuwaiti paper, reported yesterday that Muslim theologians had ruled that buying oysters purely in the hope that they might bear pearls was sinful, resulting in the immediate closure of the market, which had been flourishing for decades.

According to Islamic experts, the practice was considered tantamount to gambling, which is banned by the religion. Sheikh Mishal Mubarak al-Sabah, the head of Kuwait's Islamic Judgement Department ruled: "The sale of pearls before cracking the oyster is illegal, because only almighty God knows if it includes pearls or not."

Until the closure, which is being vigorously challenged by local oyster dealers, the Kuwaiti oysters were sold in 7 lb bags for prices ranging widely from the equivalent of £12.50 to £95. The wages of sin were not high, and reports of pearl finds were extremely rare.

Al-Qabas said that the clo-

sure of the old-established institution, a great favourite with Kuwait's limited number of foreign tourists, had been ordered after a member of the public asked the Ministry of Endowment and Islamic Affairs for an opinion on the practice.

The paper said that, as oysters in Kuwait were bought solely to search for pearls, the trade there was considered as equal to a lottery or gambling. If the mollusks had been sold for eating, it added, then the Islamic scholars would have considered it as perfectly legal.

The old market is about 10 miles north of Kuwait City and had added considerable character to a country sorely lacking in it. *Al-Qabas* said that the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs, Mr Mohammed al-Retai, had ordered its immediate closure, but that the oyster sellers were now petitioning the authorities in an effort to reverse the decision.

Diving and searching for pearls was once a central occupation of native Kuwaitis. But with the advent of the oil era and with Japan's development of artificial pearls, the occupation ran down, and with it the beds of substantial pearl-containing oysters.

TIMES DIARY

ALAN HAMILTON

A remarkable assertion that the CIA recruited the Duchess of Windsor as an agent during the 1960s is made in a book just published in the United States. Aline, Countess of Romanones, a Spanish-American aristocrat recruited into the Office of Strategic Services, the CIA's predecessor, during the Second World War, tells in her memoirs how she decided that Wallis, fulcrum of a whole European social scene, was the perfect bait to trap a US



Wallis: in from the cold

colonel suspected of leaking Nato intelligence to the KGB. Wallis was codenamed "Wilby", while the Duke, who was never told, was "Grumpy". The Duchess, who is said to have enjoyed the thought of being a spy, invited a number of suspect US officers to dinner at the Windsor home in the Bois de Boulogne; they were all flattered, and never troubled to the rise. The Countess, who is now 67 and lives in New York and Spain, claims that Wallis's dinner guests spilled enough beans for the primary suspect eventually to sense that the net was closing around him, and flee to the East. According to the book, *The Spy Went Dancing*, the Duchess afterwards told the Countess: "It's nice to know I've helped eliminate a traitor. But I feel deflated. When do you suppose you can get me a new job?"

Depressing news from Harrods; the traditional gentlemen's barbershop in the basement next to the Green Man pub is being handed over to outside contractors. Essanelle, who currently runs the in-store ladies' salon, are taking over the men's wing at a date to be announced. Essanelle's managing director, Ron Del Novo, would not be drawn on his plans yesterday, but Harrods offered a mysterious assurance that "additional services" would be available alongside the traditional short-back-and-sides. Oh no, not that hoary old one about anything for the weekend, sir.

I hear that Western correspondents in Moscow still enjoy watching a video of Soviet television news reports the American invasion of the Caribbean island of Grenada in 1983. Behind the newsreader is a map showing where the imperialist outrage occurred, including the adjacent cities of Madrid, Barcelona and Seville.

English would-be owners of a Ferrari F40, a rare and outrageously expensive motor car, have won a victory over the VAT man. When the Customs and Excise discovered that an F40, even a second-hand one, commands between £800,000 and £1 million on the open market, that was the basis on which they chose to levy VAT and car tax on anyone desperate enough to bring one into this country. Lord Brocklet, who has one on order from Italy, calculated that he would have to pay more than £55,000 in car tax alone. He and other Ferrari buffs have



Brocklet: power struggle

persuaded the Customs that tax should be charged on its proper factory gate price, which is a great deal lower, and which will bring the car tax down to £12,000 and the VAT to £25,000. His new red runabout, he tells me, will still cost him a total of £193,299, which I make the equivalent of about two dozen Sierras.

Undoubtedly the riot at Strangeways prison in Manchester was exacerbated by overcrowding, so we should do well to heed the words of the Home Secretary. "The first rule principle which should guide anyone trying to establish a good system of prisons should be to prevent as many people as possible getting there at all. There is an injury to the individual, there is a loss to the state whenever a person is committed to prison for the first time, and every care, consistent with the maintenance of law and order, must be taken constantly to minimize the number of persons who are committed to jail... In my opinion no boy should go to prison unless he is incorrigible or has committed some serious offence. I think we ought to discover some form of disciplinary correction outside prison." No, not David Waddington, but a previous incumbent, Winston Churchill, addressing the Commons in 1910.

I BOUGHT a magazine at the weekend because the cover promised Ken Russell's favourite soup. I thought it might be part of a series, and wanted to be ready with my favourite soup when the call came. Given a free choice, I should plump for Willie Russell's favourite soup on the basis that celebrity recipes hardly ever come good and a playwright writing about something that does not work would at least be readable. Soup recipes endear one to readers. There is something thoroughly patriotic about soup; the very word smacks of wholesomeness and decency — although a fish soup, which Mr Russell selected, is slightly suspect: not quite nice, possibly foreign, shades of Centigrade when we all know that Fahrenheit is more British, better. "This version," writes Ken Russell (I would have been

New martyrs to Lee's tyranny

Who said these noble words: "We either believe in democracy or we do not. If we do, then we must say categorically, without qualification, that no restraint from any democratic process, other than by ordinary law of the land, should be allowed. If you believe in democracy, you must believe in it unconditionally. If you believe that men should be free, then they should have the right of free association, of free speech, of free publication?"

The answer is Lee Kuan Yew, the tyrant of Singapore; his excuse is that he said it a long time ago. Today, his rule is based on a frenzied determination to allow no one in his realm to defy him, from which it follows that those who dare to do so, even in the smallest particular, must be crushed, and having been crushed must be indefinitely pursued with an implacable and crazed vindictiveness.

Before I turn to the latest instance of his misrule, I think it worth recording its chronology. I shall start from the time when Singapore left the Federation of Malaysia (1965) and became an independent self-governing state; from that day to this, Lee has been in power.

1966: University entrance barred to those refused "suitability certificates" by security authorities. Demonstration against Vietnam war and restrictions on trade unions suppressed; MPs, students and journalists arrested. Some detained without trial or deprived of Singaporean citizenship.

1967: Opponents of government, earlier arrested and detained without trial, win habeas corpus appeal; released, immediately re-arrested. Some imprisoned without trial for 10 or even 20 years.

1969: Juries abolished in capital-charges trials (already abolished for non-capital offences).

1970: Several trade unionists detained without trial.

1971: Lawyer representing detainees charged with contempt. Two newspapers shut.

1973: Managing editor of one of the remaining independent newspapers imprisoned without trial.

1974: Imprisonment without trial for lawyer who had tried to represent detainees, release conditional on making no further attempt to defend them.

1976: Lawyers, journalists and others rounded up and imprisoned without trial; editor who had earlier been imprisoned re-arrested. Officers standing for Parliament against Lee's party. Imprisoned. Lee sues J.B. Jeyaretnam, solicitor, for libel. (First act of Lee's persecution of this upright man; persecution still continues.)

1977: Further arrests, including another lawyer representing detainees, plus local correspondents of *Financial Times*, *Far Eastern Economic Review* and *Economist*; false confessions.

1979: More arrests; now an offence for any non-political organization to take part in any political activity.

1981: Jeyaretnam wins re-election; only MP not of Lee's party. 1982: Jeyaretnam charged and "convicted" of unparliamentary behaviour.

1984: Jeyaretnam falsely charged, before district judge, with five criminal offences; acquitted on four. Fined on fifth, but fine not high enough to disqualify him from Parliament. Judge removed from bench.

1986: Chief Justice conveniently increases fine; Jeyaretnam expelled from Parliament. More reliable judges overturn Jeyaretnam's acquittals. Imprisoned. At

instigation of Attorney-General, also struck off solicitors' roll.

1987: Legislation against foreign newspapers and magazines publishing criticism of Lee; by "gazetting" device, such papers prohibited from sending into Singapore more than token number of copies. Legislation prohibiting Law Society from commenting on government legislation. President of Law Society removed from post. Jeyaretnam appeals to Privy Council (Britain) on convictions and striking-off. Privy Council condemns entire proceedings, convictions as well as striking-off, in unprecedentedly savage terms, not least for Lee's Chief Justice, whose refusal to disqualify himself, and insistence on presiding, is plainly considered scandalous and indefensible. Lee abolishes right to appeal to Privy Council for lawyers struck off.

1988: Jeyaretnam fined for "providing public entertainment without a licence". Charge refers to speech at opening of his new party headquarters.

Now we take up the story of Lee's most recent series of offences against freedom. The key can be heard turning in the lock with a measure called The Maintenance of Religious Harmony Bill. Lee has smashed all effective political resistance to him; his judges are bent or cowed; the Singapore Bar has fallen silent (a shameful abdication, particularly when compared to the heroic defiance of Mahatir's sleazy and oppressive regime by the Malaysian lawyers); the universities dare not speak; the *Straits Times* is ever ready to applaud its master and blackguard his few and helpless opponents; every publicly printed word needs a licence; what remains?

What remains is the only source of potential opposition with the strength to practise it; a source which over the centuries and in many lands has often faced tyranny unflinching in the name of a higher power: religion.

In 1982, Lee introduced compulsory religious education in Singapore's secondary schools. Not long ago he abruptly changed his mind, and announced that even voluntary religious instruction would be banned; he must have realized that he could not control the churches if the very schools were teaching religion.

Among the Roman Catholic communion in Singapore, a number of priests and social workers were concerned at the ever-shrinking nature of Singaporean freedom, and raised their voices in protest. Most prominent and effective of these was a man called Vincent Cheng, executive secretary of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese for Singapore, such a man, living under the rule of Lee, will sooner or later be marked for vengeance, and Mr Cheng could have been under no illusion that he would long remain untouched.

Nor was he. Lee's Tontons Macoutes, the Internal Security Department, came for him and 15 others; many of these were young, and most were active Catholics. They were all held under the Internal Security Act; it was stated that they had been arrested "in connection with investigations into a clandestine communist network". (The

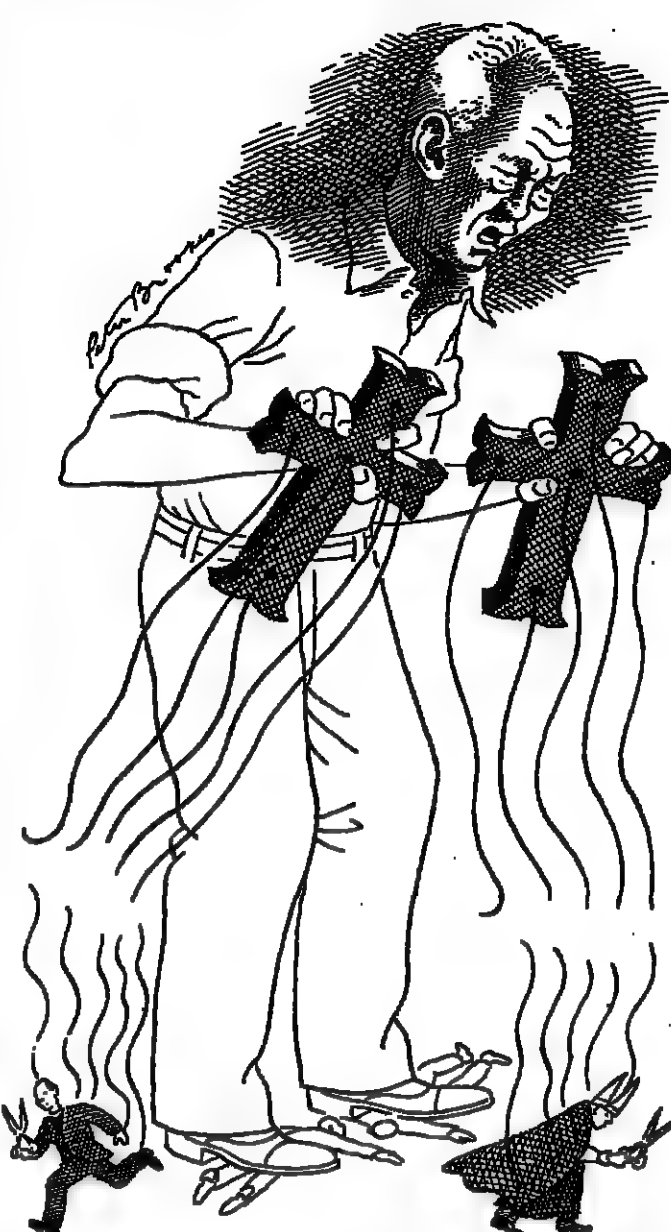
Straits Times played this up, while refusing to print a most restrained and dignified statement by the families of the detained people, which neither demanded anything nor accused anyone.)

A few days later, Lee presented his "case"; there was a communist conspiracy to overthrow the government, and the Roman Catholic Church had been used by the conspirators for their nefarious activities.

The truth is that there has been no communist threat to Singapore for nearly 20 years; the entire action was a device intended to stifle any potential dissent in the Roman Catholic Church by bullying and frightening its leaders. To bring this about, it was essential that the Catholic hierarchy should denounce Lee's latest victims.

The Archbishop of the Singapore diocese (Archbishop Yong) was called several times to the Ministry of Home Affairs to be browbeaten, but he resisted the browbeating, and Lee decided to

After the crushing of political opposition and establishment of a puppet press and judiciary in Singapore, Bernard Levin finds churchmen are now hounded too



apply pressure himself. A meeting was arranged between Lee and a group of priests and lay people, headed by the Archbishop. In case some members of the delegation should stiffen the Archbishop's resolve, Lee had most of the Archbishop's group excluded from it; these included some of the priests who had resisted in the forefront of church resistance to Lee's tyranny.

In the course of the meeting, Lee's henchmen took substantial minutes; which however later proved an embarrassment, because in Lee's subsequent libel action against the *Hong Kong-based Far Eastern Economic Review* the defence managed through legal means to get the transcripts. These revealed that Lee's public claim that Vincent Cheng was the Singapore leader of the conspiracy was false; he told Yong that he "was not interested in Vincent Cheng and his group"; his fire was directed at the unsubservient priests. The Archbishop was given an ultimatum: get rid of them or there

will be arrests. To prevent more harm to the Church, they resigned their positions, and they were subsequently barred from preaching. But that was still not enough for Lee.

Without telling Yong, he called in the Vatican's envoy to Thailand, Father D'Amelio, who, under pressure, accepted the detainees' guilt. This, Lee obviously felt, would powerfully reinforce his hand in the browbeating. So it did: still the Archbishop held out, pleading to make his own statement in his own way. But Lee was implacable, and the Archbishop finally gave in.

All that remained was the propaganda. Again behind Yong's back, Lee had fixed a press conference, to which he led his captive. But this astonishing Archbishop still would not give in completely; in response to a press question, he said of Vincent Cheng, "After going through the depositions [that is, the false confession] made by the person concerned himself, I have no way of disproving his statement. I have no way. That's why I have to take things at their face value for the time being." That last sentence, designed to indicate the truth of what had happened, was edited out of the *Straits Times* and the state-controlled broadcasting services.

Shortly afterwards, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* published an article about the business which enraged Lee. Despite two replies from Lee, of enormous length, published in full, the paper was "gazetted" — that is, restricted in circulation to a token number. The *Review* properly decided to suspend all circulation in Singapore, and Lee thereupon passed a law allowing Singapore papers to steal and print anything they wished from it, naturally excluding matter that might displease Lee. (A Lee-controlled faked version of the whole magazine is now regularly published in Singapore.) But even this did not satisfy his raving hatred of defiance; he launched a libel action against the *Review*.

No one, of course, has won a libel action (or any other kind of action) against Lee in the Singapore courts for many years, but he was taking no chances. His men bugged the telephones of the defence, and probably even the barristers' robing room; they also took in a Singapore lawyer who was helping the *Review*, and tortured him, thus gaining valuable knowledge of defence strategy and potential witnesses. A barrister on the defence side was involved in a divorce case; Lee's thugs arrived at the court on the morning of the first day to circulate prudent information.

Lee, giving evidence in the libel action, spent much of his time not answering defence cross-examination but turning to the judge and making speeches. (Perhaps he felt that this would impress the judge more deeply; perhaps it did.)

After the judgment, Dow Jones (which owns both the *Review* and the *Asian Wall Street Journal*) put out a dignified, reasonable and in no way offensive statement of regret at the outcome. (This included no reference, though it could have

filled many pages of even the largest newspaper, to the years of increasing suppression of every kind of independent press voice in Singapore.) Lee at once had the Hong Kong publisher and editor charged with contempt for their *Asia*; Lee's Attorney-General put out a statement which included these almost magnificently impudent words:

[The Dow Jones comment] would inevitably lead citizens and others who have recourse to our courts to question the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary in Singapore. These imputations... could excite in the minds of the people a general disaffection with all judicial decisions.

This is Singapore now: increasing repression of dissent, increasing destruction of the organs of free speech, increasing mania in Lee's behaviour. So to the full, final assault — with the Archbishop undermined, the Pope deceived, the resisting priests suspended — on the independence of the churches. (Lee's Bill is not directed wholly at Catholics; the position of the Muslims is in its way as fraught, but I shall discuss it separately in a future article.)

When The Maintenance of Religious Harmony Bill is passed, Singapore citizens will still be allowed to go into their places of worship and take part in their various rites. What they, and most decidedly their pastors, will not be permitted to do, is to say or write anything, in the course of their devotions or elsewhere, which the government claims might damage religious harmony — defined, of course, by the government. A sermon that touches upon social policy; a pastoral letter chiding, however gently, a minister's attitude; a scriptural exegesis which challenges the secular state; an appeal for justice, or even clemency, for one of Lee's innocent victims; those responsible for any such matter may be fined the equivalent of £3,500 or be imprisoned for two years for a first offence; for a second transgression, the victim faces double that fine or three years in jail, or both. Lee must make sure that no challenge to his rule, no criticism of himself, can appear from any quarter, and since he has closed every other avenue by which defiance might have approached, this last measure will make the magic, impenetrable circle complete.

Even Lee is conscious that such legislation needs its face saved. His chosen method for saving it is an absurd "Council for Religious Harmony", which will notionally have the right to comment on any prohibition order made by the government, but has no power to overrule Lee's decision.

This has been a long and melancholy tale; but not so long or melancholy as the life in prison that is led by Lee's victims, who will soon be joined by increasing numbers of those who have offended him by the practice of their faith. I hope and believe that they will take comfort, behind the bars, from their heroic denial of Lee's demand that they should render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to Caesar also the things that are God's.

Wellington). Hogarth appealed to such a repertoire of images in contrasting roast beef and freedom with nouvelle cuisine and slavery. Gillray drew the archetypal emaciated French Jacobin, congratulating himself on enjoying the Rights of Man while dressed in rags and eating roots, against a rotund John Bull, complaining about his taxes but tucking into a hearty dinner.

These old images have lost their power for us ever since Britannia, on our coins, began to hold out an olive branch rather than a trident. The British used to worry about a Channel tunnel; national identity might drain away as if the plug had been pulled from the national bath. Now there are no worries; there seems nothing in particular to lose.

If modern Britain can at last integrate into Europe, it will be for all the worst reasons: the lagging of our standard of living behind our rivals, a rise in civil disorder which has undermined confidence in our parliamentary institutions and the rule of law, the terminal decline of the Church of England. But the real argument about the distinctiveness of the British experience is still undecided.

The author is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

Jonathan Clark on the vanishing obstacles to Euro fusion

Is Britain still so special?

archy in creating a strong state, unified and absolute; but Alan Macfarlane counters that medieval England was unlike its European feudal neighbours in possessing an ancient legacy of economic individualism and the rule of law.

Christopher Hill and Lawrence Stone have explained the "English Revolution" of the 1640s as the crucial moment of our divergence from continental absolutism; but historians of the English county community have found no such social alignment, and Conrad Russell has rejected the model of 17th-century parliamentary history as the pursuit of liberty.

Economic historians such as Nick Crafts and demographers such as Tony Wrigley have shown how English society followed a path of industrialization and population growth in the 18th century very different from those of its neighbours, but historians of religion and politics have treated English govern-

ment as another variant of the type identified as an *ancien régime* by the events of 1789.

The social democrat analyst David Marquand has argued that Britain cannot integrate into a dirigiste, technocratic, corporatist Community because British society since the 17th century has been imbued with the values of what the Marxist historian C.B. Macpherson called "possessive individualism"; others to the right and left of Marquand see the bourgeois revolution breaking out only in 1979, and consider that British values before that date were profoundly collectivist.

Some argue that British patriotism was initially radical and populist, others that it was in origin monarchical. Imperially-minded historians dwell on Britain as Europe's greatest colonizer; Scots, Irish and Welsh historians now insist that the United Kingdom was as much a composite state as such *ancien régimes* as Austria-Hungary.

One school of parliamentary historians tells the story of our 19th-century Reform Bills as the advance of mercy, implying that we cannot merge into a bureaucratized EC because we are its only really democratic member; another school of "high political" historians punctures this reform-mindedness and shows that reforms were not the result of the unfolding logic of the case for democracy.

Fabians from the Webbs to G.D.H. Cole rearranged social history to culminate in the welfare state; recent historians such as Charles Webster on the health service and Adrian Wooldridge on education have called this achievement in question. Empire, Protestantism and parliamentary democracy all acted as symbols of identity; each in turn crumbled. Now the last symbol — Britain as the first and best social-democratic welfare state — has gone too. Socialists implicitly acknowledge this: in the 1970s they

typically regarded the EC as dominated by the authoritarian right; now they look to Jacques Delors to rescue the lame duck of welfareism.

Yet there was once a real sense that Britain was special. A high standard of living, the rule of law, parliamentary government, religious toleration: all these things once marked us out from most continental states. But we forget that thanks to victory in two world wars, most of these blessings have been exported to the Continent. Our doubts about Belgian justice or Italian Catholicism are just fading prejudices. Civil life through most of the EC is now as free as our Victorian constitutionalists — Bagehot, Erskine May, Dicey — could have wished.

British culture was special, too. We had vivid fictional embodiments of national character (John Bull, Britannia), near-legendary ancient lawgivers (King Arthur) and real warrior heroes (Drake, Nelson,

Wellington). Hogarth appealed to such a repertoire of images in contrasting roast beef and freedom with nouvelle cuisine and slavery. Gillray drew the archetypal emaciated French Jacobin, congratulating himself on enjoying the Rights of Man while dressed in rags and eating roots, against a rotund John Bull, complaining about his taxes but tucking into a hearty dinner.

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You direct, leave me to cook it

interested to learn about the favourite soup of Mr Jack Russell, the admirable England wicket-keeper and left-handed batsman, "is one I have concocted for people like me who do not like their fish soups too fishy" — a clumsy phrase: William Clark Russell, author of *List Ye Landsmen* would have put it more elegantly. Ken Russell uses cod, which is not a fishy fish; recommends fillets, which avoid the fishiness imparted by fish bones, and suggests "frying the fish gently for two minutes each side and then peeling off the dark skin". Actually, cod does not have a dark skin; unlike its poor relations, coley, saithe and pol-

lock, the skin of a cod is speckled silver, and while this is irrelevant, it did set me wondering what sort of fish soup Bertrand Russell, who wrote *An Inquiry into the Meaning of Truth*, would have favoured.

Ken Russell uses 1½ cod, four medium leeks, eight medium tomatoes, two potatoes (presumably medium), two carrots, two cloves of garlic, 1½ pints of fish stock (well, 1½ pints water and 1 fish-stock cube which is hardly fishy at all) and a glass of dry white wine. While this ends up as a pleasantly moist stew — I accept there is no reason why one man's moist stew should not be another's favourite fish soup — I was



CLEMENT FREUD

thrown by the sentence "Stir in the tomatoes, cut up, and the crushed garlic, pepper and salt." We now come to constructions "for the sauce, or rouille; drop the following into your mixer: the

inside of half a small white loaf, torn up, one teaspoon each paprika, cayenne pepper; six dashes Tabasco, one tablespoon olive oil, one desertspoon mayonnaise, two cloves garlic; blend until you have a thick creamy mixture", orders the director of *Delius, Richard Strauss, Mahler, Elgar, Bartok, Debussy* etc, and "if it does not work add a little more mayonnaise and oil and blend again". Mine did not work, but then "the inside of half a small white loaf torn up" is less precise than, say, three ounces of breadcrumbs, admittedly a pedestrian phrase.

After a lot more mayonnaise and oil, a sort of granular

creaminess was achieved; however the promised "delectable flavour" escaped me. What I got was an anaesthetized palate, tears in my eyes and what may be terminal halitosis. Why a bloke capable of knocking back such quantities of cayenne and garlic should bother to mention his preference for soups "that are not too fishy", and go on a bit about the nicety of saffron, is a good question on which to ponder... as might be the favourite soup of William Howard Russell, the *Times* correspondent who made his name in the Crimean War and went on to cover the American Civil War, Austro-Prussian war, Franco-Prussian war and the

campaign against the Zulus in South Africa in 1879... and then had to wait 16 years before getting a knighthood.

There are those who believe that everyone has inside them one novel waiting to get out. Clearly there are magazines that feel the same about people and recipes. They are as wrong in this as would-be proponents of the claim that everyone can direct one drama — on which subject I cannot do better than end, as did the saffron fish soup recipe in the weekend magazine: "Ken Russell has just completed a film based on a Dorothy Parker short story, *Dust Before Fireworks*."

If they had begun with that information, we would not have had to go out and buy more spices; but the rouille did a reasonable job of clearing the sink, which now smells a lot nicer than after we use Kleenex.



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BRINKMANSHIP IN MOSCOW

A steely quality has recently entered President Gorbachev's latest pronouncements — on Lithuania or Germany or Communist Party radicals — which belie his liberal image in the West. *Perestroika* is accelerating, yet unprecedented economic reforms are being accompanied by a sudden reversion to doctrinal purism inside the Communist Party.

This is baffling for those Kremlinologists who have interpreted any departure from the path of Westernizing reform by the Soviet leader as a victory for the "hardline" faction. They have written the latter's obituary so often that communist counter-revolution is scarcely any longer credible. Perhaps it does not occur to them that such intra-party factionalism might herald the removal of the last obstacle to change.

On Tuesday Mr Gorbachev told an audience of young communist cadres that "those who disagree with party policies should leave its ranks voluntarily." He can only have meant the most prominent communist splinter group, the Democratic Platform, which has followed almost identical movements within other East European communist parties in calling for the abandonment of important parts of the Marxist-Leninist heritage. At the same time a letter from the Central Committee, calling for a purge of this heretical "faction", was broadcast.

The most likely effect of this threat is that senior sympathizers with the Platform — such as Mr Boris Yeltsin and Mr Yuri Afanasyev — will pick up the gauntlet and form a genuine opposition. Although the greatly enhanced powers of President Gorbachev would enable him to survive his party's defeat at the polls, he can hardly contemplate with equanimity the prospect of eventual "cohabitation" with a non-communist prime minister.

Mr Gorbachev has never submitted himself to popular election and, without a mandate, he might well find his room for manoeuvre no less circumscribed than General Jaruzelski's in Poland. As Mr Lech Walesa's candidature for the Polish presidency demonstrates, a communist head of state presiding over a non-communist executive is vulnerable to challenge from a popular tribune. Mr Yeltsin has already made clear his intention to fill that

role. At the same time, Mr Gorbachev has issued new and even more aggressive threats against the Lithuanians. Speaking to Mr Douglas Hurd yesterday, he used ominous terms of art like "adventurism", and accused the Lithuanian Government of itself refusing to seek a mandate.

Simultaneously, the two-plus-four talks on German reunification seem bogged down owing to Soviet intransigence on the question of East German membership of Nato. Western diplomats are asking themselves whether there is a pattern of organized retrenchment here.

The answer appears to be yes. Mr Gorbachev remains a tactician not to be underestimated. One piece of evidence that has gone largely unremarked is the appearance of one Valentin Grigorievich Rasputin in the new Presidential Soviet. Mr Gorbachev's inner circle of confidants. Mr Rasputin is a famous novelist, and has also achieved prominence as an environmental campaigner. He is a Russian nationalist, but has never been a communist. It is not too far-fetched to suggest that he may — in popularity, if not in literary merit — become the Dostoyevsky of the 1990s. This is the kind of man whom Mikhail Sergeyevich now likes to have about him.

The Soviet President's strategy is more cunning than might be implied by his Western reputation as a liberal. He is clearly playing a double game: if the party proves itself capable of surviving, even at the cost of purges, he will remain its leader; if not, he is already preparing an alternative power base. The presidential office alone would not suffice for that. Hence he is recruiting nationalist intellectuals as potential leaders of a new specifically Russian populist front.

Part of this alternative platform might well be a tougher Soviet foreign policy, on German reunification and on Baltic secession. The present sabre-rattling on both issues is thus an attempt to test public opinion at home. How far Mr Gorbachev will press this line depends on what response it evokes from his own people. Who knows but that next month, doves will be seen over the Kremlin. It is fanciful for the West to think it can play much part in this perilous brinkmanship.

PRISONERS ON THE ROOF

When Lord Justice Woolf embarks on his judicial inquiry into the riot at Strangeways jail he should examine not just its causes and effects but the manner in which the authorities have responded to it. More than 10 days after the trouble first erupted, the ringleaders can still claim, literally, to occupy the high ground. They should have been brought down long before now and by force.

This has nothing to do with the prisoners' complaints or with the overcrowded, primitive conditions which underlie most prison disturbances. It has nothing to do with poor food or unsatisfactory remand and parole regulations. It has everything to do with the credibility of law and order within the penal system and the extent to which the public — and the majority of peaceable prisoners — can have confidence in the Home Office to run prisons as secure correctional institutions.

Within 24 hours of trouble breaking out the governor of Strangeways, Mr Brendan O'Neil, opened communications with the ringleaders and brought in a team of trained negotiators. His intention was the commendable one of trying to avoid violence and talk the inmates into giving themselves up. There was certainly a risk of hostages being harmed, of prison officers being injured and of the prison itself being further damaged.

There was another risk, that of prisoners throughout the country realizing that the delicate balance by which the authorities maintain institutional order might be upset, a danger that riot and indiscipline might spread. Violent prisoners are not susceptible to the normal constraints operating on law-abiding citizens. Such techniques as the playing of loud music and heavy hoses are unlikely to make much impact on men for whom the attention of the nation's press for their grievance — or

merely their diversion — is a welcome break from the tedium of possibly a lifetime in jail.

In the event, the longer the Strangeways riot continued, the more catastrophic and expensive the consequences for the rest of the service. There have now been disturbances, fires and damage of varying intensity at Dartmoor, Bristol, Brixton, Leeds, Shepton Mallet, Hull, Portland, Long Lartin in Hereford and Worcester and, most recently, at Shotts prison near Glasgow. This last, at a purportedly "model" jail, was potentially the most serious because a prison officer was taken hostage.

Not all of these outbreaks have been peacefully resolved, and the successful use of force at Horfield Prison, near Bristol, has increased the pressure on the authorities at Strangeways. The attack by rioters there on sex-offender prisoners segregated under Rule 43 presented the authorities with a clear and urgent justification for action.

The violence committed at Strangeways was worse than at Horfield. By giving the rioters time to prepare their defences, the task facing any later assault was made worse. Even so, prison officers are trained to use force to quell trouble. They have at their disposal anti-riot equipment, high pressure hoses, CS gas and protective clothing. Restoring order should not have been beyond their wits, even without calling on the reserve of special forces. But even special forces would have been preferable to prolonging this deplorable shambles.

Softly, softly is a justified strategy in many cases of riot, kidnap and hostage-taking. The inclination of the authorities to deploy excessive force has been rightly criticized in circumstances where patience and restraint would be preferable. Strangeways is not such a case. It demands to be brought to order.

OLD GURUS NEVER DIE

What happens to superannuated government gurus? The Prime Minister's former economic adviser, Sir Alan Walters, must be pondering this question ruefully as he adjusts to life after Downing Street. His lecture at the City University in London on Tuesday managed to attract the headlines once again but only half-heartedly. Adhering to some unwritten code, he did not finger Mr Nigel Lawson by name and thus cheated himself of more spectacular publicity.

In Sir Alan's adopted country of the United States an ex-guru's shelf-life is considerable. He would write a best-seller on "My years with Thatcher", collect a cheque for several hundred thousand dollars and spend his remaining years profitably on the lecture circuit. In the computer rankings of the world circuit he might not rank with Henry Kissinger, who is said to demand \$20,000 before offering up a few after-dinner jokes, but Sir Alan could surely make a living. All this would be done without so much as a tremor in the Constitution and while retaining the full respect due to a professor of economics at Johns Hopkins.

But this is Britain. Advisers advise in private and ministers alone step forward to collect the youquets and face the brickbats. Her Majesty's Government takes a notoriously dim view of its former servants exposing the inner workings of government to the public gaze, and not only on matters of national security.

This culture had much to do with the events surrounding Mr Nigel Lawson's resignation on October 26 last year. Sir Alan was always, emphatically, his own man — hence his

usefulness to the Prime Minister — and found it hard to dissemble his views in public. In a governmental system as secretive as Britain's, his every remark was invested with more significance than it would have received in a more open polity. When Walters sneezed the pound trembled — and Mr Lawson threw a fit.

Happily Sir Alan appears now to have found the solution. On Tuesday he was as rude about the European Monetary System as he has ever been, describing it as "fatally flawed" and claiming that it was difficult to find anything in it which was "a positive force for good". Sterling steadfastly refused to budge.

Set free from the incubus of being seen as the mouthpiece of the Prime Minister, Sir Alan can follow his inclinations and be as controversial as he likes from the new-found safety of the lecture rostrum. At the same time he has the satisfaction of knowing that his views are continuing to reach the Prime Minister: via the megaphone of the press rather than on a piece of paper marked confidential. Doubtless they will still make their way into the red box. Sir Alan is thus free to advise that he ever was when actually in Mrs Thatcher's employ.

How important all this is is another matter. Both Sir Alan and his former employer are in danger of being overtaken by events. Sir Alan may rail and Mrs Thatcher may prevaricate but Europe seems to be moving inexorably towards monetary co-operation. Economic gurus, be they "defunct philosophers" such as John Maynard Keynes or insiders such as Lords Balogh and Kaldor, may be of their age. Sir Alan's was a voice for the 1980s. It is not yet clear that it will also be one for the 1990s.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued furore over poll tax

From Mr J. L. Nicholson

Sir, The furore over the poll tax is explained by the combination of three basic facts. First, the most progressive part of our tax system — income tax — has been made much less progressive than it used to be by successive reductions in the higher rates of tax and the abolition of the investment income surcharge.

Secondly, the yield of indirect taxes, which in general are moderately regressive, has grown faster in recent years and is now much larger than the yield of income tax: thus the lessening progressive effect of indirect taxes just about offsets each other.

Thirdly, on top of changes which have favoured people with high at the expense of those with low incomes, comes the insane poll tax (your own description, March 21). Its regressive impact is exacerbated by the fact that it replaces a tax which, being based on property values, is moderately progressive. The public's reaction has been predictable.

Yours truly,
J. L. NICHOLSON,
53 Frogmal, NW3.

From Mr R. E. B. Atkinson

Sir, Contrary to the "Capping without a cause" (April 4), overlooks two key factors. In Derbyshire, there is no local authority until 1993, when we can next vote to rid ourselves of our high-spending Labour county council. Until then, charge-capping offers the only realistic option for protecting people from exorbitant community charges.

And, if Derbyshire County Council, in reducing its spending levels, decides to cut services rather than the amount of other people's money it spends on self-publicity, supporting nuclear-free zones and parties to celebrate the release of Nelson Mandela, we shall make sure that every voter in the area understands the council's priorities.

In Derbyshire there is every cause for community charge-capping — and real gratitude and relief that the Government has done it. Yours faithfully,
CHARLES HENDRY
(Prospective parliamentary candidate),
High Peak Conservative Association,
1a Hardwick Mount,
Buxton, Derbyshire,
April 7.

Hospital managers

From Dr Giles R. Glover

Sir, Lord McColl's contribution in the second reading debate on the NHS and Community Care Bill on April 3 highlighted one of the major anxieties felt by moderate critics of this legislation.

In answer to a point from Lord Ennals, Lord McColl asserted that the decision over whether a hospital should opt for self-governing status was rightly a decision for managers. Within the philosophy of the reforms, with their emphasis on the need for the NHS to become more "business-like", this seems evidently right.

However, the question this raises is whether the NHS has a body of managers competent to manage it in its present form, let alone to pilot it through the complex reorganisation proposed. Earlier in his speech, Lord McColl emphasised the need to improve management salaries.

The crystallisation of general management as a discipline separate from the professions and from administration is a relatively recent development in the health service. In many areas it has yet to

develop a coherent identity and many managers still seem to be involved in what could best be described as a power struggle to establish their dominance over doctors and nurses.

It seems unlikely that these problems will be resolved until either a new generation of managers has grown up within the NHS, or the resources are made available to attract in managers of real ability from outside (though many critics have argued that there would simply not be enough people of the requisite calibre to go round, even if the Government decided seriously to embark upon this latter course).

With these issues at the front of my mind, Lord McColl's support for the notion that local managers should be responsible for the major local decisions associated with the reforms left me with a sense of deep foreboding. Yours faithfully,
GILES R. GLOVER,
Charing Cross and Westminster Medical School,
Department of Community Medicine,
17 Horseferry Road, SW1.

Mea culpa...

From Mr Kenneth Drummond

Sir, The recent spate of frank admissions by, for instance, the Governor of the Bank of England and Sir Geoffrey Howe of policy mistakes and forecasting errors (leading article, April 9) brings to mind a remark by Winston Churchill. Commenting on Stanley Baldwin's sustained leadership of the Conservative Party in the 1920s and 1930s, during which he was three times Prime Minister, he said that one of Mr Baldwin's astute techniques, which invariably drew support in the House of Commons was "the successful avowal of mistakes".

Mrs Thatcher please note. Yours faithfully,
KENNETH DRUMMOND,
95 Longdown Lane South,
Epsom Downs, Surrey,
April 9.

Duty-free goods

From Mr I. D. Ferguson

Sir, On the BBC Radio 4 programme *You and Yours* on March 27, we were very surprised to hear a British MEP, Mr Brian Cassidy, state, when referring to intra-EC duty and tax-free allowances, "was it worth supporting an industry centred round booze and fags?"

The UK and the Republic of Ireland took the initial steps to develop what has now become a world-wide duty and tax-free market, with a turnover well in excess of £2 billion.

It is a contributing industry, the profits from which make a direct reduction to travel costs, and its existence provides employment and an important additional export market.

This great British and Irish achievement is, however, under direct threat from the EC Commission, to whom, from a purist and bureaucratic point of view, it does not have a place in the European Single Market. A serious threat to UK manufacturers and suppliers as the EC represents

approximately 50 per cent of the world duty and tax-free market; also to travellers who will lose an accepted privilege and see their travel costs rise to compensate the operators for the loss in profit from their duty and tax-free sales.

Because of its importance to the United Kingdom, we feel it is the loyal duty of all UK MEPs to support the retention of these allowances, at least until full fiscal harmonisation of internal duties. To lose this market would be a major loss to this country with the Scotch whisky industry alone losing an export market of approximately 40 million — i.e., equivalent to their sixth largest export market.

Surely the least we can expect of our MEPs is to look after our interests.

Yours sincerely,
I. D. FERGUSON (Secretary,
Association of Suppliers to
Airlines, Airports and Shipping),
Osprey,
Talland Hill,
Polperro, Cornwall,
April 5.

Regions' loss of Arts Council support

From Sir Hugh Willatt

The destruction of the Arts Council as we have known it results from the Luce/Palumbo proposals, which go beyond no doubt necessary changes. What matters is the effect on the arts. Will the regional arts bodies do the job better?

The major part of the Arts Council's work (not perhaps the most newsworthy) consists in the support of the country's theatre, orchestra, opera and dance companies, 60 or 70 of them, some in London, the majority in the regions. Their professions are constituted on a nationwide basis.

Is it really a good idea to hive off a small group as national institutions, alone qualifying for Arts Council help? Our theatre, for example, has a great reputation internationally, based not only on the work of the National and the RSC. They are, in size and resources, and often (not invariably) in quality, the leaders of our theatre as a whole. And will our best and most promising actors, directors and designers be encouraged to work outside London — and on this the regional companies so much depend — if this artificial division is made?

Close involvement in the arts in a provincial city during the earlier part of my life taught me the value of the Arts Council link and, for certain activities, the disadvantage of total dependence on locally

or regionally administered funds.

Relationship with the Arts Council does not mean London dominance. Most of these organisations came into being as a result of local effort, their governing bodies are local, their subsidy comes increasingly from local authorities, and private sources also contribute. But a vital element in the pattern has been Arts Council support and encouragement, independent of local politics, and based on assessment by specialist officers and panels consisting of leaders of distinguished members of the professions.

Why can this system no longer operate? Until recently at any rate, it did so, and triumphantly. The evidence is the flourishing state of the arts here since the war. As to "strategy for the arts" and "accountability" — the Arts Council's proposed residual functions — these must be based on responses to the ever-changing needs and initiatives of artists and artistic organisations and should not be imposed by a body remote from what is going on. Luke Rittner's resignation (report, March 29) is highly significant. Yours faithfully,
HUGH WILLATT
(Secretary-General,
The Arts Council, 1968-75),
4 St Peter's Wharf,
Hammersmith Terrace, W6,
April 9.

Hong Kong and race

From Mr Norman Tebbit, CH,
MP for Chingford (Conservative)

Sir, In an article in *The Times* (April 10) Lord Wyatt accused me and the overwhelming majority of the British people of racism and the good measure he added in my case the charge of committing a stunning "act of disloyalty".

To whom or what does he believe I am disloyal? Certainly not to the Conservative Party's 1974 election pledge that there would be no further large-scale immigration nor that of tight control to minimise numbers made in 1979, 1983 and 1987, nor to those who voted Conservative at those elections in the light of those pledges.

As to racism, if, in Lord Wyatt's view, those pledges constitute racism then he must regard the Prime Minister himself, his predecessor Mr Heath, and all who stood as Conservative candidates in those elections, as racists too.

The *Independent* newspaper poll to which Lord Wyatt refers does not suggest to me that the British people who oppose the Government's policy on this issue by more than two to one are racist. A majority simply do not want any more immigrants, whether they are West Indian, Indian, Pakistani, Chinese, Jews or from the white Commonwealth or indeed our European Community partners.

English on ships

From Mr N. P. Howard

Sir, As an ex-merchant seaman, I was appalled to read your correspondent's account (April 9) of the linguistic confusion among the crew who had to cope with the tragic fire aboard the Scandinavian Star. For over a decade, ships' officers in charge of watches have been required by a convention of the International Maritime Organization to communicate in English, from ship to ship or from ship to shore.

On passenger vessels in particular, but on most ships in general, the problems of one language for on-board communications have been neglected. It is regrettable, at a time when crews aboard flag of convenience vessels come from various language backgrounds, that no provisions for common language requirements are in force for key personnel on board.

If English is to continue as the general language for use at sea, then its present restricted forms must be widened in their application. The attitude among those who have drawn up the present systems of maritime English is that it is impossible to raise the standards of basic English for all seafarers of all countries.

If this is so, then shipowners operating passenger vessels must take on the burden of this responsibility, and train bilingual crew members of all ranks to work with passengers in conformity with the enforceable safety procedures. Yours sincerely,
N. P. HOWARD,
University of Sheffield,
Division of Continuing Education,
Sheffield, South Yorkshire,
April 9.

Question of taste

From Mrs Jill Godfrey

Sir, A vanilla Home Office folder (report on drugs misuse, April 10). Sounds delicious — and what an exciting marketing opportunity it offers!

My dilemma is this: shall I ask my stationery supplier to flavour the pale green file covers I use with pistachio or peppermint? Yours faithfully,
JILL GODFREY,
9 Briton Hill Road,
Sanderstead,
South Croydon, Surrey,
April 10.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (01)782 5046.

Defence priorities

From Major-General R. S. N. Mans

Sir, In his thoughtful analysis of the defence White Paper (April 4) Michael Evans lists a selection of units which, in his own words, now "face the firing line". Whereas it must be accepted that some reorientation of our defence effort will be necessary, equally, the Western Allies and in particular the British Government should be on their guard against succumbing to the rising clamour for the so-called "peace dividend".

The public must be adjured to appreciate that if any lasting dividend is gained from the erosion of the Soviet threat it has come about from the highly successful investment in Nato — an investment which has been founded on the dedication and professionalism of our Armed Forces.

A flourishing investment normally pays dividends to those whose steadfast support contributed to its success. It would indeed be ironic if the reward to many of our servicemen was now to be the curtailment of their professional careers.

Yours faithfully,
ROWLEY MANS,
Ivy Bank Cottage,
Vinegar Hill,
Milford-on-Sea, Hampshire.

Measure for measure

From Mr Roger Stiles

Sir, Your letter from Mrs S. V. Parker (April 7) made me chuckle. As a farmer, I work in kilograms per hectare, and sell my milk to the marketing board in litres. Where they sell it in pints. Yours faithfully,
ROGER STILES,
Field Place, Dunsfold,
Godalming,
Surrey.

From Mr Peter Phelan
Sir, When the Metrication Board was set up, the first Director of Metrication was reported as saying that there would be no one date on which the change would take place, as there had been with decimal currency, but "Everyone will go metric at their own pace". How prophetic! Hence the present-day confusion in weights and measures and the "despair" of your pedagogic correspondent, Mrs Parker. Yours faithfully,
PETER PHELAN,
Ashleigh, Long Park,
Chesham Bois,
Amersham, Buckinghamshire.

JP K. P. K. K.

Art as political ping-pong

Charles Bremner reports the latest public exchanges in the increasingly heated US debate on art, censorship and subsidy

Prosecutors charge a municipal art gallery with obscenity as police eject its patrons; record companies agree to print labels to alert the public to "explicit" lyrics; Congress orders subsidized writers and artists to sign an oath to eschew sexual themes; universities ban "offensive" speech.

With recent headlines like that, it is not surprising that many in America are wondering if the country is entering a phase of intolerance. It is tempting to discern a pattern in recent acts that impinge on freedom of expression. These include the continuing attempts by Congress to prohibit flag-burning, the issuing of "X" certificates to artistically worthy films such as Peter Greenaway's *The Cook, the Thief, his Wife and her Lover* and the arrest at the weekend of Dennis Barrie, the director of the Contemporary Arts Centre of Cincinnati, after he persisted with the now infamous exhibition of photographs by the late Robert Mapplethorpe.

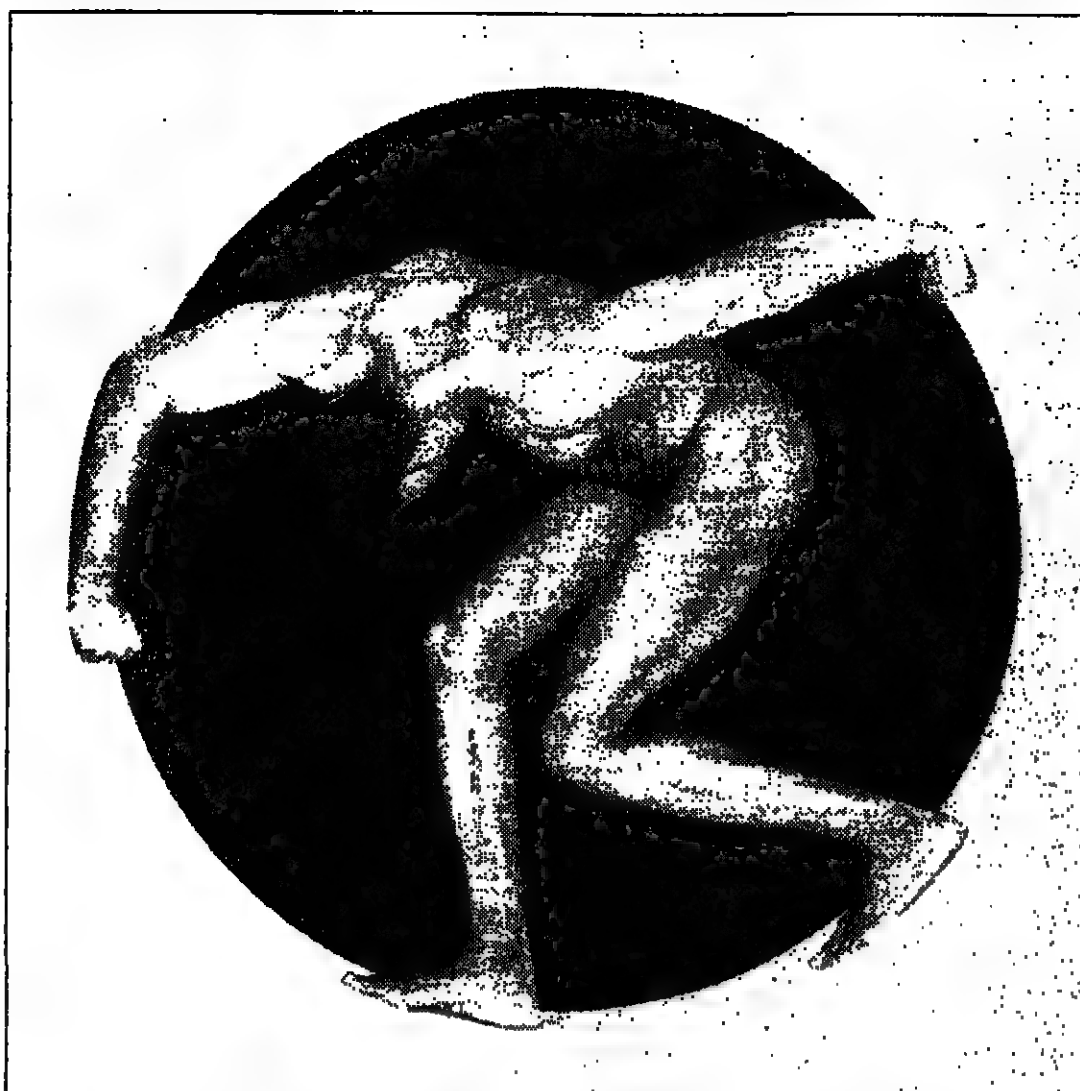
But is the US cultural world now endangered by a "profound and energetic anti-intellectualism" as claimed by more than 500 arts commissioners, gallery chiefs, film stars and other "arts leaders"? They rallied on Capitol Hill a couple of weeks ago to protest against attempts to kill government support for the arts.

The answer is probably no, or at least not yet. What is going on seems more a product of political bullying by a vociferous minority than any sea-change in national attitudes. For a start, that minority is not always on the same side of the fence. The university rectors and academics who favour rules to bar speech on their campuses that advocate racism or sexism stand for the ideological opposite to the citizens of Cincinnati who are enraged at the "smut" in the city museum.

In the academic and intellectual world, the generation formed in the Sixties now represents the establishment. There is little danger of it succumbing to a supposed conservative backlash.

If you take television — the most powerful cultural force by far — you see more experiment than ever before, even by the big commercial networks which have so long practised severe self-censorship and bowed to the safe middle road. A spate of new-style sitcoms such as *Roseanne* and *Married... with Children* are tackling sexual and social themes with more realism than ever before, and winning high ratings.

On Sunday, the ABC network launched *Twin Peaks*, a wicked



One of the late Robert Mapplethorpe's "homo-erotic" but arguably not obscene photographic prints

and subversive soap opera produced by David Lynch of a kind that would never have made it to prime time in previous years.

There is plenty of evidence, from the ratings of the new television shows to opinion polls that reveal the majority of Americans to be more morally tolerant than ever before, for arguing that the arts world is exaggerating the menace it believes it is facing. Even the action in Cincinnati, the first obscenity prosecution of an American museum, can be seen as an exception.

Since the early 1970s, when it banned "adult" book shops and topless bars, the city has regarded itself as the conscience of middle America, a national bulwark against smut. This week's proceedings look as though they may have backfired, since they have mobilized considerable local sup-

port for the exhibition and criticism for the prosecutor. Membership of the museum, for example, has jumped 50 per cent since the affair began.

Anyway, the prosecution, prompted by half a dozen homo-erotic pictures among several hundred regarded to be of high artistic merit, stands little chance of surviving higher legal scrutiny, say the experts. This is because the Supreme Court ruled in 1973 that no exhibit could be deemed obscene unless "the work taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value", thus effectively making prosecution of serious artworks impossible.

But that is not to deny that the arts world is facing a battle over principle in its campaign to preserve the National Endowment for the Arts, a body set up 25 years ago

to administer the relatively meagre federal subsidies. This year it is granting \$171 million — a fifth of the cost of a single B-2 bomber — to 4,500 artists, museums and exhibits.

The row began last August when the cancellation of the Mapplethorpe exhibition at Washington's Corcoran gallery was used by Senator Jesse Helms and conservative supporters to draw attention to the offensive side of some government-financed works, and to demand a halt to all federal subsidies.

That attempt ended with a compromise in Congress which obliged the NEA to require recipients to promise not to use their grants to produce works which "may be considered obscene, including but not limited to depictions of sadomasochism, homo-eroticism, the sexual

exploitation of children or individuals engaged in sex acts...". The pledge is being attacked in the arts world as akin to the anti-communist oaths required of federal employees in the McCarthy era.

Now Senator Helms, along with religious and conservative groups, has opened a well-organized assault on the NEA, the federal government's most visible cultural agency, ahead of an autumn vote in Congress on the body's future. In a campaign organized by the American Family Association, politicians across the country are being deluged with letters and postcards denouncing the NEA for supporting "obscene, pornographic or anti-Christian art".

Among offensive exhibits being targeted is "Modern Primitives", a Seattle exhibition which looks at the ways various cultures decorate and pierce their bodies.

The onslaught is provoking widespread lament in the opinion pages about America's slide into "reverse glasnost" at a time when liberties are expanding elsewhere. When the 500 arts leaders took to Capitol Hill, one of the high-points was the reading of a message from Vaclav Havel in which he warned Congress: "An artist must challenge, must controvert the established order. To limit the creative spirit in the name of public sensitivity is to deny to society one of its most significant resources."

However, it was not the Czechoslovak president but the conservative American one who has done most to stiffen the backbone of the politicians warring under the pressure of the anti-obscenity movement. President Bush took an unexpected stand, saying that although "deeply offended by some of the filth being portrayed as art", he opposed censorship of subsidized art in any form.

John Frohnmayer, the NEA chairman, now says the administration supports subsidizing art without any restrictions at all. But there are still many congressmen afflicted by visions of opponents accusing them of financing lewd pictures. With elections in November, many will be tempted to stick with the safe course.

There are also many, even among the democrats and the liberal elite, who argue that the taxpayer's right to decide what sort of art he wants his dollars to buy has nothing to do with hampering creative freedom. As Jonathan Yardley, a liberal Washington columnist put it this week: "Whatever the arts lobby may tell you, it isn't an open-and-shut case."

Richard Morrison on a film about the composer Hindemith by Tony Palmer

Coded stab at Hitler

A huge 16th-century German painting comes to life, with its hidden political message acted out in a Liverpool church. Medieval knights clash swords, pilgrims tramp through misty forests. Christ dies on the cross, while Jews die in the gas chambers. Home movies of Adolf Hitler at play are counterpointed with the voice of Sir John Gielgud reading from Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* about the "foul fiend clothed in scales like a fish".

That is your Easter Day viewing on ITV. Tony Palmer created the nine-hour screen biography of Wagner. He directed poignant and revealing television documentaries about Britten, Walton and Callas, as well as *Testimony*, an audacious film adaptation of Shostakovich's disputed "memoirs". His latest venture may be his most provocative yet.

Though one might not guess from the description above, it is a documentary about the composer Paul Hindemith, who died in 1963, and specifically about Hindemith's opera *Mathis der Maler*. The *South Bank Show* will transmit the programme on Sunday. "Melvyn Bragg was initially concerned that one part might be considered blasphemous," Palmer says. "But when we showed the film to the IBA, their only stipulation was that there would be no commercial breaks during it."

In the early 1930s, Hindemith's reputation was at its peak. His music — progressive but utilitarian, in accordance with the artistic principles of his friend Bertolt Brecht — was played throughout Europe. His teaching at the Berlin Hochschule revolutionized music theory, and his own performances were astonishing. He was a virtuoso on the viola, merely accomplished on every other orchestral instrument.

In fact, he made only one bad career move. His closest musical colleagues were Jewish, as was his wife. The Nazis quickly branded him a *Kulturbohschewist*. Eventually he was forced to emigrate to America, where Yale and Harvard fought for his services.

But before he left Germany he wrote *Mathis der Maler* ("Matthias the Painter"). It was never performed in Germany — "the Nazis weren't stupid," says Palmer. Palmer contends that the opera is a "scarcely-veiled attack on the Nazi Party", identifying Hindemith's own struggle with the political struggle of the painter Matthias Grünewald in the *Peasants' War* of 1524.

Grünewald is best known for his enormous Isenheim Altarpiece, which took four years to paint and depicts the history of Christ, and

much else, on 12 moveable panels. It is known that Hindemith decided to write the opera after seeing this painting. "But no book on Hindemith mentions that the Isenheim Altarpiece has a political sub-text," Palmer affirms.

"It is a coded message on behalf of the peasants against the landlords. When you examine the iconography in detail, and it is very complex, you begin to understand the code. Obviously Hindemith had this explained to him. That is why he chose this particular painter as a relevant operatic subject for 1930s Germany. The opera is really about art in a dictatorship; can it be put to any useful function?"

Palmer's film, which uses the orchestral suite from *Mathis der Maler* in its entirety, certainly decodes all the painting's "hidden messages" and explicitly. He maintains that letters provided by the Hindemith Foundation support his radical interpretation. The decision to overlay the musi-



Hindemith: fled to America

cal soundtrack with Gielgud's reading from *The Pilgrim's Progress* may seem more whimsical. His skill, however, lies in tying the Bunyan narrative into the contours of Hindemith's music.

Christian's struggle to find his "inheritance incorruptible", despite the conflicts with "hobgoblins and dragons", is mirrored by Hindemith's own life of struggle and exile, by the symphonic struggle in the music, and by the bringing to life of the Isenheim Altarpiece. "I had the Bunyan idea in mind before I visited Hindemith's last home," says Palmer. "So when I arrived I was astounded to find *The Pilgrim's Progress* in the bookcase."

● Hindemith — a pilgrim's progress will be transmitted by the *South Bank Show* (ITV) on Sunday at 10.30pm

TOMORROW: John Russell Taylor reviews current art and architecture shows in Paris

TOMORROW 7.15PM
BACH: ST JOHN PASSION
Sung in German
English Chamber Orchestra
George Malcolm conductor
Martyrs Hill Evangelist, Johannes Mannov Christus,
John Milne Pilate,
Lynne Dawson soprano, Nicholas Clayton counter-tenor,
Andrew King tenor, Brian Bannanay-Scott bass,
Tallis Chamber Choir
Seat Prices £16 £13 £10 £7.50 £5
BARBICAN HALL 01-638 8891 (9-8 daily)

Graces and favours

The future of the Canova statue "The Three Graces": saved for the nation or sold to the highest bidder?

Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Trade, is not one to duck decisions, but when it comes to "The Three Graces", Canova's statue, on which a second export ban expired eight days ago, he appears still to be in a quandary. While his office, which is not renowned for its aesthetic sensibilities, is silent, the art world is on tenterhooks.

The Government has rejected an ingenious scheme by Lord Rothschild to save the Canova by matching its value against his tax bill, for this would effectively mean the Government buying the work. So now, like Paris, who had to choose between three daniels, Mr Ridley has three choices.

Under procedures established 35 years ago, he can let the statue go to the Getty Museum, which is prepared to pay \$7.5 million for it, or he can persuade the Government to buy it for the nation. The third choice is an invention of his own: to allow a private buyer to step in and snatch away the daniels. The Scottish-born hotelier twins, Frederick and David Barclay, have offered themselves as suitors.

But by accepting their proposal, Mr Ridley would destroy the principles of the export restrictions. According to heritage lobbyists, the procedure for assessing a work's value in the face of an export application would fall into disrepute. Under the established system, desirable works threatened with export go before the Reviewing Committee for the Export of Works of Art, which uses a list of criteria such as aesthetic and historic importance, to decide whether an item should be allowed to go, or be placed under a temporary export ban to give national museums a chance to match the price the foreign buyer was prepared to pay.

With purchase grants frozen at present levels, however, no British museum had a hope in Hades of raising enough to buy the Graces. The V&A has asked the public to put their pennies in the box, but perhaps because people are alienated by the entrance charges now made at the museum, only £330,000 has been raised, a paltry £80,000 from the public.

Now Mr Ridley has assumed the power to return the statue to the commercial arena. This new proposal apparently applies to all other objects currently under an export ban, including Adrien de Vries's "Dancing Faun", which became the world's most expensive sculpture at auction when it

fetched £6.8 million at Sotheby's recently.

"The Reviewing Committee is becoming an extremely fine antique shop. Private people can come and buy, and export them later," said Anna Somers-Cocks, editor of *Apollo* magazine, and an energetic campaigner to save the Graces. Once a work of art has gone before the committee it is likely to be a fine investment, and if Mr Ridley has his way, private investors will want to buy such works for future profit.

Mr Ridley's gesture implies that last-minute buyers are national heroes, but in the eyes of heritage campaigners, they could be just shrewd investors.

"Selling to such candidates only postpones the evil day that the work is sold. 'The Three Graces' could easily be on the market again within a generation," said one specialist.

Others ask what the Barclays mean by promising "public access". The Barclay office will not comment.

In the meantime, Mr Richard Luce, Minister for the Arts, has clouded the issue by suggesting byzantine ways to improve the system. His contribution to the debate is difficult to take seriously, because ultimately Mr Ridley has the power of decision. He has suggested, for instance, that a museum or gallery interested in buying a particular work should buy an option to purchase. But if it were then unable to raise sufficient funds for an outright purchase, the deposit would be lost, which would inevitably lead to complaints about the waste of money.

In response to the problem of vendors who export important collections by selling off items separately, as occurred with the George Brown collection of ethnographic, Mr Luce proposes a voluntary code of conduct under which "public or semi-public" bodies would announce any plans to sell off collections of objects. This would not constrain private collectors who wished to sell. Nor would it help if purchase grants remain as low as at present. Indeed the grants are so small that it is hard to see how any tampering with the system can keep works of art in Britain against the wishes of foreign buyers.

Neither Mr Ridley nor Mr Luce appears to have faced the likelihood that when trade barriers come down in 1992, the present system will be rendered redundant. Some believe that under article 36 of the Treaty of Rome, the existing procedures of individual countries will be respected. Mr Ridley and Mr Luce should get on a bicycle made for two, and proceed to Brussels to find out what is in store. They may find that the best way forward, as has been widely proposed, is for each nation to compile a list of works which can never be exported.

Sarah Jane Checkland

Light to light through darkness

THEATRE
Benedict Nightingale
Much Ado About Nothing
RST, Stratford



Roger Allam as Benedict, Susan Fleetwood as Beatrice

Carlisle's Don Pedro, his lordly, supercilious patron; and, not least, Susan Fleetwood's Beatrice and Roger Allam's Benedict.

That warring couple, sub-plot though they may supposedly be, inevitably gravitate to the evening's centre, and mostly deserve to do so. Fleetwood saunters on-stage idly brandishing a sword with which she teasingly threatens her uncle. A moment later, she is throwing a gauntlet at Benedict as if challenging him to a duel. As Amazons go, she is genial and humorous, but still formidable. That causes problems.

She must fall in love with Allam, who never seems on her emotional level. His Benedict is a fastidious cynic who affects a dantesque moustache which he removes in the second half, presumably in deference to Beatrice's wishes. He has good-humoured moments, and achieves a certain gravity when overcome by eros. One cannot, however, see him surviving marriage to someone with Fleetwood's "wild heart".

Another problem appears at the play's most famous moment, Beatrice's demand that Benedict "kill Claudio". Seconds before, Fleetwood has been exuding a

touching tenderness. Now, all is feminist indignation rising to feral rage. In each case the actress is perfectly plausible, but she fails to reconcile lover and avenger. It is as if she were two people, each powerfully emotional.

Alexander's production has its foolish moments. There is little point requiring the lovelorn Benedict to don ghastly green and pink frills, complete with rickety platform shoes, if he gets no chance to impress Beatrice with his supposed allure, and indeed abandons the outfit straightaway.

At its best, though, the production combines fun with sensitivity. The celebrated scene in which Benedict is gulled into believing Beatrice loves him is particularly well-handled, with bubbles of cigar-smoke rising like an SOS from the mishapen bush in which he is hiding.

Again, it is pleasing to see Dogberry played, not as a yokel spouting Mummeret, but as a stately Rotarian with an aldermanic voice and belly. In George Raistrick's performance, he comes across as a blend of Olly Hardy and Captain Mainwaring of *Dad's Army*; majestically complacent and, as such, yet another illustration of the production's theme.

show, and just as patchily successful.

The funniest scenes reinforce English notions of Irish grandeur: a Mother Superior explaining procreation with a doughnut ring and a sponge finger; and an old dame pulling on her nightgown before removing her clothes.

The most touching is a strange scene where Brenda chips the tiles that her cousin (a peaky Gary Lydon) has struggled to buy sooner than own damaged goods, he chucks it in the canal. There is powerful emotion pent up here, mysterious and real.

Ned Sherrin directs with an alert eye to the bitter antics of Olde Ireland and he draws real performances in supporting roles from Gary, Brown and Pauline McLean, but he fails to make us see Brenda's devotion to her odious partner as anything but halfhearted.

Jeremy Kingston
Same Old Moon
Nuffield, Southampton

The play's status as a memory play is clear from the start when Brenda (Glynis Barber) strolls on in front of the gauze screens of Paul Farnsworth's set, cleverly placed to suggest the outside of a maze, transparent mesh one moment, brick walls the next.

She finds her widowed mother and aunt (Julia Foster, Annie Tobin) as ungenerous in their feelings for her as ever. Mention of the father (James Hayes) — dead but still visible and grinning from beyond the gauze — leads to a sequence of memories from an Irish girlhood, as isolated from each other as turns in a variety

FROM the pillow of his hospital deathbed the horrible old father of this play's heroine sums up a lifetime's experience. Wander the whole world over, he tells her, it's still the same old moon.

Since the extent of his travels has been the journey from Galway to London 40 years before, and nothing has altered his habitual spite, a daughter with any spirit would trash his remarks as the familiar ravings of an old bigot. Brenda, however, is impressed, and the play's author, Geraldine Aron, takes his words for her piece's title.

This is odd, because we are shown nothing in Brenda's busy adult life in Africa and Australia to lend support to such stay-at-home counsel. Quite the reverse. It is only back home in Galway or London, or wherever her Irish family carry their Ireland to, that nothing changes.

"GLORIOUSLY FUNNY"

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David Robinson reviews *Santa Sangre*, *Uncle Buck*, *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* and the re-released *McCabe and Mrs Miller*

Comic cuts to the gore of yore

Innocence goes back to carnage

TELEVISION

Sheridan Morley

MARY Holland's tense interview for Channel 4's *Dispatches* with Gerry Adams of Sinn Féin may have been what made the news on television last night, but the unforgettable historic images came from a documentary about an altogether different war.

For *Inside Story* on BBC 1, Michael Latham took five American businessmen to Japan. They passed for average tourists in Hiroshima until, while looking around a hospital on the site of some of the worst of 1945's devastation, they revealed almost casually to one of the doctors that they had been the men who flew the planes on the mission that dropped the atomic bomb.

But this programme was not about regret: the five pilots felt they were avenging their country for Japan's war crimes, and they went back out of cool curiosity, to the place where 80,000 people died in a millisecond. "Lotta history here," as one of them said, looking around a memorial park.

Latham's film seemed to be telling us that the men have become innocent tourists at the sight of their own devastation. On BBC 2, Lucinda Lambton came back, with an *Alphabet of Britain*, looking as usual like a young Joyce Grenfell on speed. The constant worry about television, for those who work in it, is that the camera has always preferred the amateur to the professional. You can spend your life trying, with make-up and autocue and clip-board, to graduate from some university of the airwaves, and you will still come a poor second to a Barbara Woodhouse or an Arthur Negus figure, who always manages to suggest that she or he is not really even thinking of doing it for a living.

Lambton is another of those great amateur eccentrics who will be destroyed if anyone tries to tell her how to front a television programme, instead of simply letting her get on with it. With a voice that swoops around like that of Lady Bracknell, unerringly emphasizing the wrong word, she is now off on an alphabetical tour of British exotica. She started with a 10-minute survey of daft Eastern follies, ranging from a sarcophagus visible only from the top deck of a bus, to a vast Chinese interior, carved by a corrupt architect forced to conclude his life as a grocer in Dulwich and disgrace.

It is Lambton's loony enthusiasm, coupled with her determination that we should not dawdle at the back, that gives her the most cherished of all English female aspects: that of the mad but lovable games mistress, suddenly put in charge of the museum outing.

CINEMA

The name of Alejandro Jodorowsky will be unfamiliar to younger filmgoers today, though in the early Seventies his films *El Topo* and *The Holy Mountain* commanded an enthusiastic cult following. 11 years ago, after the disastrous production *Tick*, Jodorowsky abandoned film to write comics.

At 60, he has returned to filmmaking with *Santa Sangre* (18, Metro, Gate Notting Hill). It remains to be seen whether the old fruit will be revived. Jodorowsky has lost none of his will to shock. *Santa Sangre* is as violent and bloody as the schlockiest Hollywood horror, though the violence tends to be psychological rather than graphic.

He claims that the story is based on a real-life Mexican character, Gojo Cardias, who murdered 30 women in his mother-dominated youth. After 10 years in an asylum, he was rehabilitated, and became a lawyer and writer. Happily married, he has today no recollection of his bloody past.

Feinix, the hero of *Santa Sangre*, is impersonated at different periods of his life by Jodorowsky's sons: Adán and Axel — handsome boys with long, aquiline faces. We first meet Feinix at 20, perched in a tree in the garden of a madhouse and reflecting (in flash-back) on his formative childhood.

Born in a circus, at 12 he witnesses a domestic spat between his parents — the brutish knife-thrower and the glamorous trapeze artist — after his father has dallied with the tattooed lady. Mother destroys the offending portion of her husband's anatomy with acid; father retaliates by slashing off mother's arms and then cutting his own throat.

This, however, is only the prologue. The story really gets under way when the grown-up Feinix escapes from his asylum, to join his mother in a variety act in which he stands behind her and

supplies her missing arms with his own, as if she were a puppet.

When this convenient arrangement is carried into the home, Feinix's daintily manicured hands butter mother's toast, perform her toilette, and (to the young man's deep confusion) wreak her bloody revenge on any woman to whom he is attracted. Thus Oedipus meets *Jack the Ripper*, *Psycho* and *Nightmare on Elm Street*.

Jodorowsky's imagination remains rich and inventive as well as wild and macabre. The variety of his experience has left its mark: he studied with Marcel Marceau, worked with Fernando Arrabal, doted on the surrealists, directed variety shows and writes comics.

There is always something to look at, and the set-pieces equal the best of *El Topo*: the fanatical worshippers at the pool of the Holy Blood that gives the film its title; the elephant's funeral, with its cortege and massive casket, and the subsequent assault upon the carcass by starving street people.

The performances are mostly terrible: only Blanca Guerra as the mother looks something like a professional; but acting seems, for Jodorowsky's purposes, to be secondary to the fact that the people look right and decorative. Jodorowsky remains an acquired taste for those who can take his particular mixture of extravagance, absurdity and visions.

A generation has grown up since the appearance in 1972 of *McCabe and Mrs Miller* (18, Camden Plaza). If anything, to me the film looks better now than the first time round, and it remains one of Robert Altman's finest and most individual works. It still takes the viewer by surprise: what seems on the surface a ribald comedy Western, the familiar tale of the gunman and the whore, suddenly reveals itself as a lyrical tragedy about loneliness.

The setting is a frontier mining town in 1902, recreated with a realism that exposes the fiction of



Giving her a hand at the piano: Axel Jodorowsky as Feinix, Blanca Guerra as his mutilated and murderous mother, in *Santa Sangre*

most Westerns. The township of Presbyterian Church is an ugly place, with tents and shabby half-built wooden structures, at the mercy of the rain and the snow. The people who live here are fustian, rough, ignorant and dirty ("Stand away from that stove; you tends to get kinda ripe").

McCabe (Warren Beatty), a gambler with an unmerited reputa-

tion as a gunfighter, sets up as entrepreneur, building a saloon and renting out three unwashed whores. Mrs Miller (Julie Christie) rides into town, accompanied by a steam tractor, and proposes a partnership based on her own more sophisticated experience of the brothel trade.

Thereafter, the action progresses in a wayward fashion that permits us by stages to discover the vulnerability of the antagonists, their loneliness and their ultimate inability to make the connection that they both desire.

Altman has his own distinctive style. The screen is crowded, often obscured in the dark interiors. Voices overlap or are heard in indistinct snatches from the background. The snow and the rain and the haze mist the screen. The images are predominantly brown and green and gold. The story and the sentiment of the film defy easy classification. It would be satisfying to find a new film as good as this today.

John Hughes (*The Breakfast Club*, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*) generally works in Chicago; and the city leaves its mark in a style of comedy that is distinctly more mordant than the general run of

Hollywood teen films. *Uncle Buck* (12, Plaza 2, Cannon Oxford Street) is set in the stockbroker belt of Evanston, on Chicago's North Shore.

Called away to a parental sick-bed, the genteel Russell can find no one to baby-sit their three children but disreputable, gambling, boozing Uncle Buck (John Candy). Buck moves in and makes an immediate hit with the two infants, but experiences bigger problems with the Russell's angry and difficult teenage daughter.

The story of the likeable reprobate who succeeds in exposing and mending the hidden deficiencies in seemingly ordered and happy lives is a perennial box-office winner; and John Candy — genial, funny and alarmingly overweight — fills the role sympathetically.

Hughes's comedy is particularly rich in reactions: Mrs Russell's alarmed recoil when threatened with a kiss by her gross brother-in-law; the children's delight in every unlicensed antic of their odd uncle; Candy's own torment when he has to choose between a dead cert at the race-track or a call to save his tiresome niece from a teenage seducer.

Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure (PG, Cannon Haymarket) is about as witless as children's comedies come. The gist is that Bill and Ted are high school students so stupid that they think Joan of Arc was Noah's wife. Luckily they are given the chance to travel through time in a cosmic telephone box, and bring back a gang of historical figures to help them in their graduation presentation.

None of it makes much sense: the story is merely an excuse to show a cosmos created from advanced computer graphics; to celebrate a passing fad in Californian slang, "valley speak", which dubs everything "excellent" or "bogus"; and to set Socrates, Billy the Kid and Joan of Arc loose in a shopping mall.

Alex Winter and Keanu Reeves (*Bill and Ted*) are pleasant actors who have both been seen to better advantage in period roles: Winter as Byron's friend Dr Polidori in *Haunted Summer* and Reeves as Danceny in *Dangerous Liaisons*.

The film was directed by Stephen Herek from a script of sorts by Chris Matheson and Ed Solomon.

VIDEO BOX

Geoff Brown

A weekly selection of films recently released on video. The year refers to the date of first release, or in the case of television films, of first broadcast.

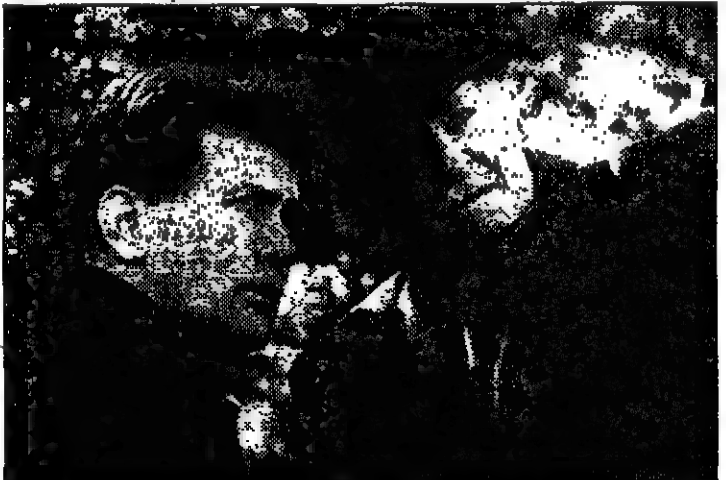
THE BEAR (RCA/Columbia, PG): Adventures in the Canadian Rockies with a grizzly bear and an orphan cub. Simple, engaging family film, with anthropomorphic cries and grunts mostly replacing dialogue. Directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud. 1989.

CAT CHASER (Entertainment in Video, 18): Abel Ferrara's high-octane version of an Elmore Leonard thriller, with Peter Weller as a Florida hotelier sucked into a plot to rob a gangster of hidden money, and Kelly McGillis as his seething old flame. 1989.

CRISIS OF HORRORS (Warner, 18): Grotesque, spirited British horror film with Anton Diffring as an exquisitely perverse plastic surgeon. 1980.

DA (RCA/Columbia, PG): Hugh Leonard's autobiographical stage comedy, sweetly and sturdily filmed by character actor Matt Clark. With Martin Sheen as the son returning to Ireland for the funeral of his irascible father (Bernard Hughes). 1988.

ERIK THE VIKING (CBS/Fox, 15): Writer-director Terry Jones's



Martin Sheen (left) as Charlie Tysan with Bernard Hughes in *Da*

heavy-handed jumble of Norse mythology and Pythonesque humour. Tim Robbins supplies charm as a warrior trying to bring peace to the Viking world. 1989.

FIELD OF DREAMS (Guild, PG): Celestial voices encourage farmer Kevin Costner to use his cornfield for a baseball pitch. Overly cosy Americana, though Costner and writer-director Phil Alden Robinson display a winning touch. 1989.

THE KILL-OFF (Palace, 18): Bracingly sleazy adaptation of Jim Thompson's novel about a malignant gossip's hold over a drab seaside resort. Excellently

played by largely unknown players; an exciting feature debut by writer-director Maggie Greenwald. 1989.

THE TEMPEST (Laurieview, U): Ludicrous television Shakespeare from 1960, with Lee Remick killed-out for a high school prom as Miranda, Richard Burton as Caliban, and Roddy McDowall as a prancing Ariel.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (CIC, U): Moses viewed by the vulgarian, Cecil B. DeMille. Video viewing softens the blow of some less-than-special effects, but leaves intact the hoary dialogue and Charlton Heston's beard. 1956.

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CIC VIDEO

HEALTH

Portrait of the artist in pain

Don't shoot the pianist: he probably has enough health problems already, ranging from headaches, backaches, stomach aches, palpitations and repetitive strain injuries to a mental state that veers between high anxiety and deep depression. His friends in the rest of the orchestra may be equally badly off, as may performers in opera, ballet and the theatre, where suffering for art's sake is often not so much a noble tradition as a real pain in the neck.

But now concern has led to action. The Association of Medical Advisers to British Orchestras (Amabo) has announced that it would shortly be appointing two volunteer doctors to look after the health of players with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. It hopes eventually to attach medical advisers to every orchestra in the country.

Ian James, the association's founder and a consultant physician at the Royal Free Hospital, says: "Musicians have a bad time of it from a health point of view. They spend long periods every day in positions for which the human body is not designed. They have long and unsocial hours, a lot of travelling and they live under constant stress - a wrong note is heard by hundreds."

Repetitive strain injury - or "regional pain syndrome", as Dr James calls it - has become, he says, almost epidemic. Violinists top the league of injuries, but almost every instrument has its own hazard: cor anglais thumb, for instance, or cymbal player's shoulder.

Problems can arise from bad technique and poor posture, exacerbated by tension. Surveys have found, for instance, that 88 per cent of orchestral players in this country experience "performance anxiety", strong enough to impair their playing. In comparison, only around a third of Continental players have the same complaint,

Musicians suffer more than most for their art. Now, as Liz Gill reports, orchestras are to have their own volunteer doctors

but they average only half as many concerts a year.

In addition, British musicians, who typically earn £10,000 to £12,000 a year in a provincial orchestra, often supplement their income from other sources. Overwork and nervous tension may account for the fact that 10 per cent say they drink alcohol before a performance, 2 per cent take tranquilizers, and 2 per cent are on beta-blockers.

Problems can arise very early in a musician's life, Dr James says. "You can get a particular teacher turning out a whole batch of such players. His technique might be fine for him but disastrous for everyone else. Or you can have a real martinet who causes excessive anxiety, or who simply makes pupils play too long."

The association, which was formed at the end of last year, has plans for preventive as well as curative work. Dr James hopes that what it learns from musicians may be relevant to other patients, such as those who have developed RSI from working with high technology. "Music is extremely hard work physically. The parallel would be with top sportsmen, and there are similar pressures in that you are only as good as your last performance."

In fact the Amabo doctors, who will be GPs given extra training by the association, will have a role similar to the doctors attached to many football teams: no pay, but

plenty of free tickets and social camaraderie. Helen Ranger, the association's administrator, says: "Music is where art and science meet. And it's also an important antidote to a doctor's work." Dr James, for instance, is a keen amateur viola player, and Jane Faulkner, his wife, is the violinist in the English Piano Trio.

The response to the request for volunteers was so overwhelming, from both doctors and practitioners of complementary techniques, that a sister organization, the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine, has now been set up to bring together artists and appropriate specialists.

Each discipline in the performing arts has its own potential for disaster. Shirley Hancock, a physiotherapist and founder of the Remedial Dance Centre in Harley Street, lists strains, sprains, stress fractures, ruptured ligaments, pulled hamstrings, torn cartilages and inflamed tendons among a dancer's catalogue of woes.

Most troubles, she says, arise from bad technique, over-use or an artist's physical unsuitability. "I don't think classical ballet is unnatural. It is demanding, but it's also the finest form of exercise. But only a minority are suited to it. If students are not properly vetted and go on trying to do something they're not capable of, they end up doing something wrong with their bodies to compensate. A lot of dancers are simply not very musical. If you are musical then you're rarely hurt, because everything comes together at the right moment."

The centre uses no medication on the grounds that it merely masks symptoms, and tries to treat the injury by remedying the technical fault which has caused it.

David Griffiths Davis, a voice expert, agrees it is vital to correct as well as cure. "It's no good removing a nodule on the vocal cords surgically if you're leaving the bad old habits that caused it."



Mr Garfield Davis, an ENT specialist whose voice clinic at the Middlesex Hospital, London, sees actors and singers from across the country, says the business is bedevilled by mythology. "Some teachers and acting coaches tell their pupils to gargle with aspirin, which is just about the worst thing possible because it thins the blood and can cause small haemorrhages."

Voices are also affected by smoking and drinking, dehydration, shock, poor posture and tension, which can lead to shallow breathing and increased pressure on the larynx. Even eating habits can hurt: "You can get problems with acid regurgitation in actors and singers who tend to eat late at night."

Training is not necessarily a safeguard. "You often get the situation where their singing voice isn't. They give a performance and then go out to dinner and spend all evening trying to chat against background noise."

The voice is often the first faculty to be affected by stress and fear, according to Carola Grindea, former professor of piano at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and founder of the International Society for the Study of Tension in Performance. Symptoms of extreme stage fright include nausea, vomiting, migraine, palpitations and tremor. Professor Grindea distinguishes be-

tween the sort of fear that helps creativity, and the kind that can undermine a performance and even incapacitate the performer.

"If you're all cocksure before hand you probably won't do so well, but there are those who find their confidence suddenly goes in the middle of a play, and they can then be suddenly gripped by these symptoms."

Professor Grindea has now set up a performing arts clinic on premises loaned by the Royal College of Music to give free consultations to both students and established artists.

Martin Lloyd-Elliott, a psychologist, says: "Creativity comes in waves, and sometimes the fire goes out for no apparent reason. It may be only temporary but it feels devastating. The drive to perfectionism is healthy up to a certain point, but beyond that it can lead to destructive thoughts and obsessive rituals."

Certain roles may bring emotional upheavals, either because the work touches a raw nerve, or because the part is so powerful that the player, particularly in a long run, feels his or her own sense of identity becoming overwhelmed. "This is a very solitary and vulnerable life," says Mr Lloyd-Elliott, who runs Arts Psychology, an advice and counselling service for artists ranging from rock stars to playwrights.

"I don't think creative people are any more neurotic than the rest of the population, but it can be a cruel way of life, with unbelievable pressures. Often there is no outlet for immense talent. I would be like saying to a doctor: 'You've trained for 10 years, now you can see one patient a week.'"

Dr Walter Somerville, consultant physician and cardiologist at the Middlesex Hospital, points out that the challenge of public appearances leads to the release of the "stress hormones", adrenaline and noradrenaline, and a subsequent rise in blood pressure and heartbeat. In most cases the experience is merely unpleasant, but where there is a pre-existing heart weakness, such stress could trigger an actual attack.

Dr James has no truck with any suggestion that suffering, either physical or psychological, enhances anyone's abilities. "That idea is absolute rubbish. All it means is that performers pay a terrible price. I've seen brilliant careers destroyed which might have been saved with the right help."

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Cannabis damage

IF MY West Indian patient had read this week's *Times* leader on cannabis, he would have known that his views summed up one of its points. He expressed them succinctly when he said, with a grin: "Doctor, whisky gives the English a red face, ganja gives us red eyes. It doesn't seem very different to me."

That cannabis, either the dried leaves and flowering head - marijuana - or the resin, hashish, has over 180 synonyms in the Pharmacopoeia is indicative of its worldwide use as a drug to produce a dreamy state of detachment from harsh reality. Its popularity is due to the sense of well-being, even exultation, it produces.

Cannabis has an advantage over alcohol and nicotine in that it does not produce any significant physical dependence. If there are any withdrawal symptoms they are slight and ill-defined: sweating, loss of appetite, increased anxiety and insomnia have been reported. Cannabis does, however, produce psychological dependence; in time many smokers find that their contentment is linked to the availability of the drug.

There is strong evidence of progression from cannabis smoking to use of cocaine and heroin. But the connection seems sociological - related to its availability within certain social groups - rather than to any physical need to overcome any tolerance which has developed to the cannabis. Within these groups a person is more likely to be offered hard drugs and, when high on cannabis, is more likely to be tempted into trying them. Supporters of the legalization of cannabis argue that if it were legally available, reliance upon the criminal fraternity to provide the drug would be redundant.

The lack of physical dependence is the only medical point in favour of cannabis. Even in small doses, it slows mental reactions, disrupts neuro-muscular co-ordination, and alters the appreciation of space, three attributes which

make it particularly dangerous in a society reliant on the car and complex machinery. It produces short-term memory loss, and although in some people it induces garrulousness, psychological testing shows that it in fact reduces verbal skills. In over-dosage it can, and often does, cause toxic confusional states. The smoker may hallucinate, become disorientated, and occasionally paranoid. Concepts of social responsibility are lost, and when this is coupled with feelings of exultation, a high can produce mayhem.

The effects of using cannabis regularly are more worrying. Nearly 15 per cent of habitual users admitted it had harmed their personality, causing memory loss, laziness, and difficulties in concentration and integration into society. Interestingly, many were aware that they had become obsessed by their own personalities and emotional problems, the characteristics which can make regular cannabis users social bores. Detached observers would put the proportion suffering from long-term personality changes at higher than 15 per cent. These observations of permanent psychological change are supported by brain scans which show cerebral atrophy, or brain shrinkage.

The association between schizophrenia and cannabis is important. As well as producing a schizophrenic-type confusional state, over-indulgence may also induce an attack in a susceptible person. Studies on recruits in those countries where national service is still obligatory have shown that although no difference was detectable on entry, long-term follow-up demonstrated a clear relationship between schizophrenia and cannabis smoking.

The West Indian had come to talk about impotence, for he had learnt that there is one important common characteristic between cannabis and alcohol - over-indulgence in either can decrease the amount of circulating male hormone, so that the genitalia shrink and the breasts grow.

MEDICAL BRIEFING
Dr Thomas Stuttford

Toast, tea and the transplant games

6 I'm 47 and I had a heart transplant operation on March 7, 1989. I was divorced, and living on my own with my three children. It got so bad in the end that the children had to bath me - I couldn't breathe. I was very weak and couldn't sleep. At the beginning of 1987 I had a heart attack while I was playing football - I've had four heart attacks.

When they told me I'd need a transplant I knocked me back 20 yards. I couldn't believe it. I used to smoke 50 to 60 cigarettes a day, but I didn't really drink. I played football, and did training, the physical side of sport had really kept me going.

After the operation I was in hospital for five weeks. There was a lot of pain, but you've got to go through the pain to get better.

In the morning I'll have cornflakes, a couple of slices of toast, and tea. The drugs I take make you feel hungry, anyway, and if you keep on eating you'll get overweight. I've got to stay between 10st 3lb and 10st 7lb. You have to take Cyclosporin every day of your life so the heart isn't rejected, you mustn't miss one. Then

there are antibiotics and steroids - they used to make me look like a hamster. Now I have reduced the dosage and I look a little bit human. You also grow a lot of body hair - I'm covered in it.

I used to smoke an unbelievable amount. It was very hard giving it up. But I wouldn't go back to smoking now because I would undo what someone has done for me. I promised the doctor that I wouldn't smoke again. I am allowed to have a pint of alcohol a day.

I play a lot of volleyball for St Bartholomew's Hospital. In October I was in the England volleyball games and won a bronze medal - that's not bad, eight months after the opera-



PHIL YOUNG

I am going in for the Transplant Olympic Games at Crystal Palace this August. I didn't think about my health before, but now I am cautious and look after what I eat. I used to let people run over me - I would rather walk away than get into an argument - now I stand my ground. Maybe it is because I have been so near death that nothing else matters.

It doesn't hurt, but I can feel my heart beating all the time because there are no nerves there any more. I hope people realize that Bart's does these operations and that we can raise enough for them to carry on.

Interview by Pamela Nowicks



Susan is just like any other 10 year old... **but she lives under the shadow of diabetes.**

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BRITISH DIABETIC ASSOCIATION
11 Queen Anne Street, London W1M 8AB, Tel: 01-253 1111

Going for gold

5 The news that gold could be employed in the treatment of AIDS patients perpetuates a long tradition of using gold and other metals in the care of patients with sexually transmitted diseases. Gold was a popular treatment in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was thought that it promoted the secretions of the kidneys, skin and salivary glands, and was considered particularly suitable for treating "women, children and those of a nervous disposition".

Among the many recommendations for its use was the treatment of syphilis and scrofula (TB). The gold preparations were either finely pulverized and taken by mouth, or mixed into a paste with butter's lard and absorbed through the skin after being covered by a dressing. Bismuth, another metal, later replaced gold in the treatment of syphilis; when given by injection it was reasonably effective, and was one of the standard treatments until penicillin became available. Even in the early years of this century gold was still being recommended in cases of chronic tertiary syphilis, but

even the standard textbooks thought that it was unlikely to be effective. Intravenous gold injections (gold sodium thiosulphate) were prescribed until the last war for the treatment of TB and leprosy.

Gold is now used only in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. It can be given by injection as Myocrisin (sodium aurothiomalate). It can bring great relief to a sufferer, but care has to be taken as gold can be very toxic and cause severe liver damage. Reactions are to be expected in up to 5 per cent of patients.

Another danger is sudden failure of the bone marrow, which can result in dangerous anaemia. Ulceration of the mouth, skin disease and destruction of the lining of the bowel also occur from time to time. Perhaps the most interesting use of gold was as gold leaf, just as it is used by picture frame and furniture gilders. The leaf was spread over a skin ulcer in an attempt to encourage it to heal. The therapy may or may not have been of much benefit, but it did serve to demonstrate that gold, contrary to popular belief, can give rise to a hypersensitivity reaction. Quite serious local skin allergies occurred where the gold leaf had been applied, of the same type that is occasionally seen today under a wedding ring or earring.

Perfect fit?

♀♂ Newspaper reports suggest that the chances of a couple staying happily married are proportional to the degree of difference which exists between the shape of their pelvises. The female bony pelvis is broad, with a well-rounded prow; this allows the baby's head to descend easily. By contrast, the typical male pelvis is narrow, with a sharper front-end. As the shape of the pelvis is an important sexual characteristic, the suggestion must be that men who are very masculine should marry very feminine women. The statistics were related to the likelihood of the marriage lasting, rather than to the intensity of the initial attraction, for, conversely, it has often been observed that in casual encounters the reverse is true: feminine men are attracted by masculine women, and vice versa. In any case this information is of only limited interest to match-making hostesses. It takes a "gynaec" house officer many months to learn how to assess the shape of a female pelvis accurately, and the male pelvis needs an X-ray examination before an opinion can be given.

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BOOKS



GLYNN BOYD HARTTE

And is there such a place, after all? Mr Ousby in his preface to this history of tourism suggests that "of all nations we have perhaps the most strongly defined sense of national identity". The "perhaps" is for once in order here, since in his text he goes on to suggest that this identity is an artificial construct, exclusive and even wilfully selective, comprising only a "tourist map" of this country. A map which contains no more than literary shrines, country houses, ancient ruins and the more colourful aspects of the national landscape.

Nevertheless this is a book about the sense of place; it is a study in Englishness, and in the nature of Englishness, since it is no coincidence that it is precisely in those four areas under survey that we can look for the traces of that history which has helped to create our national identity. It is apt, too, that Ousby concentrates his investigations into travellers' tales from the mid-18th to the mid-19th centuries, since it

A nation's foundation stones

Peter Ackroyd finds a country's future in its past

THE ENGLISHMAN'S ENGLAND
By Ian Ousby
Cambridge, £14.95

was in this period that the modern sense of national identity was firmly established.

So it is that, when he begins his account with an examination of literary "shrines" as no more than the analogue of medieval pilgrimages, he is right in a larger sense than perhaps even he intends — of course it is true that English people flock to Poets' Corner or to Stratford in order to gaze upon the monuments or the mansions of dead writers, but they are also visiting one source or site of their own identity. The great dead, the illustrious dead are the country; it is the very atmosphere of the dead which pervades ancient monuments and the presence of the long dead which sanctifies the landscape about which Ousby writes.

But he is not about to assume what might be described as a

secular theory of English history; he is concerned with that "tourist map" after all, and is inclined to see commerce, with its attendant vices of emptiness and imposture, rather than atavistic piety. So, for example, the popularity of the country house tour in the mid-18th century can be viewed essentially as an early equivalent to the amusement arcade. There are many channels in the history of taste, however, and none quite so significant as the fact that what we admire today was shunned just yesterday — Shakespeare's birthplace neglected until the middle of the 18th century, fine 16th and 17th-century country houses viewed as little more than the deplorable relics of a barbarous age. Nevertheless what the 18th-

century traveller, or tourist, saw in the country houses of his own period was something of great importance for every period — what Ousby calls "a pattern of aesthetic, even moral, refinement". And that is still the value of what might seem to be no more than the vainglorious aspirations of rich entrepreneurs. These secular cathedrals are in fact, like cathedrals themselves, barometers of the values of the nation.

Yet there is also another kind of history, another scale of values,

another measure of a nation — it lies in its remote past, and in the sentiments which are associated with the monumental works of those who came before us. Ousby emphasizes the crucial importance of Stonehenge in this pursuit. Whether seen by Inigo Jones as a Roman temple or by William Stukeley as a Druidic monument, the point is that it became one of the key symbols by which to define the nation itself. That is why Ousby is able to chart the interest in ruins as a true manifestation of national consciousness; it is not simply a "picturesque" taste, promoted by the influences of Romanticism or the vagaries of neo-Gothic; it is, rather, an instinctive and necessary reshaping of the values of

the entire nation. The preference for Gothic irregularity over neo-Classical proportions, in the taste of the late 18th century, is for example part of a larger change of attitude towards English history and thus English identity. A version of Europeanism was being rejected, you might say, and current controversies over standardization have their parallels in the aesthetic arguments of a previous century.

And this is nowhere more true than in the understanding and analysis of the English countryside. Once seen as merely barren and "horrid", to be cultivated or subdued, then viewed as "picturesque" or unspoiled and therefore in need of protection from the depredations of man, the crags, the tumuli and the lakes were always part of the living body of the nation.

The interest in the "sublime" aspects of nature was also related to the interest in Gothic ruins, as Ousby suggests, precisely because they were part of the same sensibility — the same awe of the past and the same reverence for "Ruins of a broken world". That is why Wordsworth's Guide to the Lake District confirmed the interest in that region as part of "history and human culture".

Of course there has always been a great deal of nonsense associated with this, and Ousby's account of 18th and 19th-century pilgrims of the "picturesque" cleverly and amusingly charts a number of the absurdities and inanities courted by those who wish to change the natural world into painterly landscapes or living dioramas. But the true engine of admiration and awe is fuelled by the larger sense than anything this dilettantism can be said to embody. We are dealing with "common property" or "national property", to use two 19th-century terms. For we are dealing with our sense of our own selves. That is the true meaning of *The Englishman's England*.

Fitting from bed to bed, here a luscious viscountess, there a supple divorcee, Raphael is really a bit of a devil. Actually he's all devil, dispatched to earth by himself, to further the Satanic masterpiece of spreading gloom and despair throughout planet Earth.

I approached *The Reluctant Devil* reluctantly. In my experience, demonic intervention spells whimsy. This book narrowly fails to confound the equation. Certainly it enhances Miranda Seymour's reputation as a mistress of the fable.

Her trick here is to move between the galactic view and the microcosmic concerns of a single street in a London suburb. Hell's inhabitants are predictably, witty, wilful and wicked, but the population of Selena Street is not far behind. And they are certainly no less eccentric. Take Millicent Press, who divides her time between wedding Sir Hubert Harrowby's grave in St Giles's churchyard and altering young students to the dangers of a dinner invitation from the street's resident lecher, Victor Greenderyn. For all her efforts, the promiscuous prof usually scores of an evening. But it's a different story during the day, when he finds it impossible to make his target at the word processor — writer's block isn't in it, until he decides to marry the most besotted of his acolytes.

What's cooking in Hell's kitchens

John Nicholson

THE RELUCTANT DEVIL

By Miranda Seymour

Helmans, £12.95

DOG DAYS

By Mavis Cheek

Macmillan, £12.95

STREETS ABOVE US

By John Healy

Macmillan, £12.95

Raphael understands these goings on all too well, just as he understands what brings superior Charlie Everett to clairvoyant Fay's doorstep, and why love sick Lucy has set off in deadly pursuit of Gareth Lloyd-Evans.

Raphael is in trouble wherever he looks. A diabolical encounter at the National Gallery lands him in trouble with the law, while release brings an even fiercer grilling from a suspicious potential father-in-law. Satan is getting cross, too, suspecting that his incompetent

assistant is going soft on earthlings. From where he sits, what Raphael is spreading looks suspiciously like joy. So Raphael faces the worst punishment Hades has to offer — life in the hundredth system — unless he ensures that none of the stories he has helped create has a happy ending.

All very whimsical, but charming too and written with great verve. Mavis Cheek is another writer who likes to crack on. Her first book, *Pause Between Acts*, deservedly picked up the John Medley First Novel Award. It was an account of life after divorce remarkable both for its breezy wit and lack of self-pity. I missed her second, and must confess to being disappointed by number three, *Dog Days*. The problem is that the record seems to have got stuck, another heroine has finally got shot of a demanding brute of a husband. Supported by an understanding 10-year-old daughter and an animated comfort blanket sprung from the Battersea Dogs Home, Patricia Murray struggles pluckily to make a new life.

Romantic interest is right off the agenda, though matchmakers lurk around every corner. Gordon-the-Ex, an opera singer with an ego even grosser than his diaphragm, does his best to scupper her efforts to re-establish emotional equilibrium, while the neighbour's rabbit completes a strong animal cast. Flashbacks to earlier episodes in the Pat 'n Gordon saga do not really compensate for the lack of a discernible plot. There are some reasonable one-liners and the odd character who catches the attention. But there is no real development, and in the end Miss Cheek's relentlessly breezy tone becomes — well, relentless.

The location of John Healy's first novel — the London Underground system — is inspired; its cast — the muggers, vagrants, bent cops and arts who spend most of their waking (and sleeping) hours on the tubes, full of promise. But *Streets Above Us* is another victim of the character-at-the-expense-of-plot syndrome. Healy writes with complete conviction about a world governed by topsy-turvy moral values in which personal survival is the only priority. Pickpocket Mo is trying to claw his way to better things, and there is some effective satire in the reaction of the Hampstead literary set to his plea to be taken seriously as a novelist. But it does not come to anything, and the book's final twist, though sick enough to satisfy the most jaded palate, is predictable. An opportunity lost, I'm afraid.

Thoughts of Germany in the night robbed a lot more patriots than Heine of their sleep. The life of Adam von Trott zu Solz was dominated by insomnia of the spirit as his country destroyed itself around him. What makes his story particularly painful is the rejection he suffered by those who distrusted his resistance to the process.

Descended from an aristocratic Hessian family and schooled in Prussia, his skill in assuming the mannerisms of a convinced Nazi made him a lynch-pin in the internal resistance movement from the earliest days of Hitler's rise. He was hanged in 1944 for his part in Stauffenberg's plot to kill Hitler, after trying vainly from within the German foreign service to rally support from abroad for the internal resistance.

Giles MacDonogh's book is a powerful defence of those Germans who chose participation rather than emigration as their way to challenge the tyranny, and whose choice has always engendered at best half-hearted approval. Their path failed, but the account of internal resistance among the officers, civil servants, and nobility poised on the brink of success, bedevilled by ill-fortune and self-doubt, is a neglected chapter of war history.

At von Trott's trial the judge commented that his lack of moral fibre was due to his years at Oxford and travelling round the

A life lived in whispers

Anne McElvay

A GOOD GERMAN:

Adam von Trott zu Solz

By Giles MacDonogh

Quartet, £17.95

world. He was right at least about the importance of von Trott's early adult years at Balliol, but Oxford never returned the regard in which he held it. Even his All Souls circle, including Sir Maurice Bowra and A. L. Rowse, distrusted his philosophy and his patriotism, both cast in a code of Prussian idealism impenetrable and suspect to the non-German mind. To Diana Hubbard he wrote that he saw little point in male friendships: "My ultimate wish is to be of the greatest possible political service to my country. My friendships with men are more or less directly dependent [on this]."

Von Trott blamed the university's hostility on lack of imagination and realism — traits that later extended to Eden and Crossman, whose dismissal of the German resistance was due to foreign policy convenience rather than due consideration of its significance, as the shockingly casual memoirs reproduced here show. With the exception of the Astors, few Britons were of any help to von Trott. Bowra, to whom he trusted the secret of his resistance work within the German foreign service, promptly informed one of Roosevelt's advisors that he was treacherous, scuppering both von Trott and the entire internal resistance movement in Washington's eyes.

The research is painstakingly minute throughout, but the sheer proliferation of names tends to overwhelm. For those without a ready knowledge of the top-tier personnel of the Third Reich, the second half is a taxing mental exercise best conducted with one finger in the index. Despite the detail, the final chapters describing the miscarried Stauffenberg plot lack tension, and the account of the trials and conclusion are unsatisfactorily scanty.

Von Trott never doubted his choice of a life lived in whispers, but the sense of a lifetime of disciplined, directed and, ultimately, futile opposition makes this an overwhelmingly sad account.

Unmasking the epic of modern Australia

At a time when much contemporary fiction has been choosing between the thinly mandarin or various muscle-bound poses, David Malouf's writing has seemed like a lucid reproach and a quiet example of how fiction may still be individual, honest and humanly truthful. This latest novel is loaded with jewelled phrases; but it is also a sustained and sometimes epic inquiry over 70 years into the nature of modern Australia — its buried quiddity but also its transparency, its self-confidence but also its lack of it.

Digger and Vic, the novel's two heroes — and for once that word applies, since Malouf raises them out of ordinariness into uniqueness — are in some ways representatives of Australia, and of the upheavals of the 20th century. Digger is born into Australia's pastoral quietness, represents his country abroad in the Second World War, and languishes with thousands of other Australians in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp between the Malay and Burmese borders. Vic makes the classic movement from rural backwater to urban flood: after the death of his alcoholic father, and later of his sick mother, he moves to Sydney to live with guardians; he too is captured by the Japanese, but survives his ordeal with greater tenacity, becoming a cele-

NOVEL OF THE WEEK

James Wood

THE GREAT WORLD

By David Malouf

Chatto & Windus, £12.95

brated businessman.

This is the bare outline of the book, its epic momentum. But Malouf's great talent is precisely for unmasking the epic or world-historical — for finding the human backing to history's all-reflecting mirror. "Great events do not always cast a shadow before them. In Malaya in 1941 the Japanese Imperial Army arrived on rickety bikes. It didn't look like the first part of a triumph or a moment from history." The section of the novel that deals with the war and the tribulations of the camp, is in some ways the crux of the book. It is here that Malouf dramatizes the uncertainty of the Australian identity, at a moment when all the usual props — the colonial legacy, the false superiority of whiteness over blackness — have disappeared. In the camp, Digger, who is blessed with a phenomenal memory, holds on to his Australian memories with jealous ferocity; he hordes them like things. Because one thing this novel makes clear is that whatever the reality of the "Great World" we move in, the greatest reality is inside our heads. "You're head. Which was the same shape as the world, and really was the world, only on an infinitely small scale."

At times *The Great World* lacks bite — one wonders if Malouf is not too decent and generous an artist to produce work of real genius, since great art always flirts with cruelty, an edge of harsh brilliance. But there are plenty of subsidiary beauties here — enough to fill the novels of his contemporaries many times over.

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OPERA

Barry Millington

LONDON

DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NURNBERG: Dull production enhanced by Bernd Weild's intelligently smug Sachs and Christoph von Dohnanyi's stylish conducting. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC2 (01-240 1066). Tonight, 5.30pm, Mon, 3pm, 24-25.

MACBETH: Another in the series of superbly imaginative Verdi productions from the ENO team. Jonathan Summers and Kristine Slesinski as the diabolical duo. Mark Elder conducts. English National Opera, London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (01-836 3161). Tonight, Sat and Wed, 7.30pm, 23-25.

JENUFA: concert performance of the strongly cast Glyndebourne Festival production, with Roberta Alexander as Jenufa, Philip Langridge as Laca and Anja Silja as the Kostelnicka. Conductor: Andrew Davis. Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (01-828 8800). Tues, 7.30pm, 23-25.

OUTSIDE LONDON

L'HEURE ESPAGNOLE/GIANNI-SCHICCHI: Ravel/Puccini double bill in new productions by Martin Duncan, conducted by David Lloyd-Jones. Opera North, Grand Theatre, Leeds (0532 445328). Tonight, 7.15pm, 24-25.

LA BOHEME: Lynne Scholey's production for Travelling Opera, designed by Ward Vossay. King's Theatre, Southsea (0706 822222). Tonight, 7.30pm, 27-28. Birmingham Theatre, Northampton (0904 24611). Tues, 7.30pm, 24-25.

LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR: Opera 60's bare stage - if it's the work at Donizetti's popular work. Lucia Clemens does the blood-drenched nuptial gown. Sands Centre, Carlisle (0228 252222). Tomorrow, 7.30pm, 25-28.50. Coronation Hall, Haverhill (0228 822222). Wed, 7.30pm, 25-27.50.

THE MERRY WIDOW: Musically strong, dramatically weak, Opera 50 ventures. Sands Centre (as above). Sat, 7.30pm, 25-28.50. Coronation Hall, (as above). Tues, 7.30pm, 25-27.50.

JERUSALEM: Verdi's reworking of Lombard contains some superior music. A challenging staging by Pierre Audi, conducted by Paul Daniel. Opera North, Grand Theatre (as above). Sat, 7.15pm, 24-25.

DANCE

John Percival

LONDON

THE FEATHERSTONEHAUGHES: All male group in mannered sketches by fashionable cult choreographer Les Anderson. ICA Theatre, The Mall, London SW1 (01-990 3847). Tonight-Sat, 8pm, 24-25.

RED HOT PEPPER: Brian Macdonald's work to music by "Jelly Roll" Morton is on the closing programme of Les Anderson's *Jazz de Montmartre*, with four pieces by Argentine choreographer Mauricio Wainrot, hitherto unknown here. Sadler's Wells Theatre, Rosebery Avenue, EC1 (01-278 8818). Tonight-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat 2.30pm, 24-25.

PRINCE OF THE PAGODA: Saturday night's performance by the Royal Ballet has been cancelled. The ballet is, however, being shown on BBC2 on Saturday at 8.55pm, with its original cast headed by Doreen Bassett, preceded at 7.50pm by a documentary about its creator Kenneth MacMillan. Sylvie Guillem (Wed) and Viviana Durante (April 18) dance the only remaining performance this season.

Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-240 1066). Wed, 7.30pm, 21-24.

Prizewinners back home



Ignore the tawdry title, *New Work*. The latest programme by London Contemporary Dance Theatre is a serious attempt at finding new choreography, returning for the occasion to their roots at The Place. One of the creators is American JoAnn Frawley-Jansen, formerly a dancer with Dan Wagoner, LCDT's new director. She has been making dances since 1974 and started her own company in 1986. Her new piece for nine dancers of LCDT, *Noon Talk on Millionth Street*, (pictured here, Paul Liburd and Isabel Tamen dancing) is set to a string quartet by Scott Johnson and inspired by writings of J.G. Ballard, Kleist and Nietzsche. Kim

Brandstrup also has his own company (*Par Gyn* was their latest) and his first work for LCDT, *Oryen*, has just won the company an Olivier award. This time he is tackling the Jewish play *The Dybbuk* as subject matter for his choreography, using music by Ian Dearn and traditional Romanian folk songs, with costumes by Craig Givens and a post-modernist gothic setting by Brothers Quay. The other new work is by Aletta Collins, a young English choreographer, who will have designs by Tom Cairns but has revealed no details of music or subject. Place Theatre, Duke's Road, WC1 (01-387 0031). Wednesday to Saturday, 8pm, 27 (25 concs).

OUTSIDE LONDON

LONDON CITY BALLET: *Le ballets* at Bingham (tonight); then a mixed bill including the comic *Graduation* (Fri, Sat) and *Aurora's Wedding* (Fri, Sat) and at Buxton (Wed).

Forum Theatre, Bingham (0845 552688). Tonight-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat 2.30pm, even 25-27, mat 23. Opera House, Buxton (0528 72150). Wed, 7.30pm, 24-25-28.50.

GISSLE: Christopher Goble's production for Northern Ballet Theatre. Theatre Royal, Brighton (0273 29401). Tonight-Sat, 7.30pm, mat today, Sat 2.30pm, even 25-28.50, mat 24-25-28.50.

BOLSHOI STARS: Group headed by Bessmertnova and Bylova in one act of *Swan Lake* and short extracts from other ballets. Festival Theatre, Brighton (0803 558441). Tomorrow, Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 2pm, 27-28.50. Malvern Theatre, Camberley (0227 757249). Sun, Mon, 7.45pm, mat Mon, 2pm, 21-22.50. Mayflower Theatre, Southampton (0703 229771). Tues, Wed, 7.30pm, 21-28.50.

WHO CARES?: Balanchine's *Gestswain Ballet* is the highlight of Scottish Ballet's programme also including Balanchine's *Scottish Symphony*, and a new production of Petipa's *La Bayadere*. Kings Theatre, Edinburgh (031 229 1201). Tues, Wed, 7.30pm, 21-28.50.

ORIENTATIONS: Shobana Jayasingh and dancers in a collaboration with Michael Nyman mixing South Indian dance and contemporary music.

Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-240 1066). Wed, 7.30pm, 21-24.

THEATRE ROYAL, BURY ST EDMUNDS

785050. Tomorrow, 8pm, 23.50 (22.50 concs).

THE TERNAL GALOP: Joyful piece about English views of France, by Matthew Bourne for Adventures in Motion Pictures.

Malton Theatre, Gloucester (0452 505098). Wed, 7.30pm, 24.

READINGS

Cris Cheek

DAVID MALOUF: Widely respected novelist and poet promotes his new novel *The Great Work*.

Pearly Society, 21 Earl's Court Square, London SW5 (01-373 7881). Today, 7.30pm, 22.50 (22 concs), 21.25 members.

THE ROLE OF THE POET: The ICA inaugurates an important new East European forum with Estonian poet, Jaan Kaplinski author of *The Same Sea in Us* and *Travels of Paul Darnley*.

ICA, The Mall, London SW1 (01-930 3847). Today, 1pm, 23, plus 21 day membership.

APPLES AND SNAKES: A Nelson Mandela reception committee benefit. A crowded and seriously safe bill of Pan-African performers, including Pitika Ntuli, Lami Sessay, Marsha Prescod, Nisi, Netia, Brother Nini, Blocs Masoko, and Ahmed Shaki. Plus special guests.

Covent Garden Community Centre, 46 Earlham Street, London WC2 (01-990 3847). Today, 1pm, 23, plus 21 day membership.

BEST SELLING BOOKS

For the week ending 7th April 1990

FICTION

1 *A Suitable Life*, Mary Wesley Bantam £12.95
2 *The Regeneration*, John Mortimer Viking £12.95
3 *Golden Fox*, Wilbur Smith Macmillan £14.95
4 *The Cambridge Theorem*, Tony Cape Hamish Hamilton £13.95
5 *The Folk That Live on the Hill*, Kingsley Amis Hutchinson £12.95

NON-FICTION

1 *Barbarians at the Gate*, Burroughs & Helyar Cape £15.95
2 *Goldstrike*, Bill Jamieson Hutchinson £15.95
3 *Michelle*, 1990: James Macmillan £12.95
4 *Liar's Poker*, Michael Lewis Hodder £12.95
5 *The House of Movers*, Al Ailezhauser Bloomsbury £12.95

PAPERBACKS

1 *Devils and Demons*, F.D. James Faber £2.99
2 *First Light*, Peter Acroyd Abacus £2.99
3 *Heretic's Apprentice*, Elia Peters Futura £2.50
4 *The Bridgehead*, Ruth Rendell Arrow £2.50
5 *On My Way to the Club*, Ludovic Kennedy Fontana £2.99
6 *We the People*, Timothy Garton Ash Granta £2.99
7 *The Negotiator*, Frederick Forsyth Corgi £2.99
8 *The Potter's Field*, Elia Peters Headline £2.99
9 *Historic Novels*, Shelia Alcock BTL Leisure £2.99

Source: Hachards, 187 Piccadilly, London W1

PERFORMANCE ART

Ghislaime Boddington

GRANDE MILLER PRESENTS A GEM STOPPING: This gripping mixture of physical theatre, live and recorded music and visuals teases the audience with its exploration of children's games mirrored into an adult world. Warehouse Miller was co-founder of the influential Impact Theatre.

The Place Theatre, 17 Duke's Road, London WC1 (01-387 0031). Tonight-Sat, 8pm, 24 (24 concs).

ANNE GRUFFIN - A Little Personal: Why, witty, moving and beautifully constructed, this show gives an evening to laugh at and be challenged by - a rare combination.

T&C, 20-22 Highbury Corner, London N5 (01-700 5718). Tues-Thurs (weekly), 7.30pm. Today until May 13. Tues-Sat 12-5pm, Sun 2-5pm, free.

DAVID WARD: Keepers of Light: A new piece made following a series of workshops with students and dancer Sue MacLennan. Ward works with light-sensitive paper and a torch creating "photography without a camera".

Cambridge Darkroom, Odeon Brewery, Gwydder Street, Cambridge (0223 350723). Today until May 13. Tues-Sat 12-5pm, Sun 2-5pm, free.

FRAN COTTELL: Window Shopping - Especially at 24: One of a series of shows made for window spaces at this new streetwise gallery. Fran Cottle "addressing power, passivity and blind consumerism" 24 hours a day.

"109 Clarendon Road" (two windows) at St Martin's College of Art and Design, London WC2 (01-753 9080). Today until May 3.

MIRIAM SMITH: Performance Project No 14 - The Last Supper: A four-course meal, interspersed with performance snippets from Miriam Smith (The Art Gangster) and guests. Simulation provided for both brain and stomach.

Third Eye Cinema, 348-354 Southwark Street, London SE1 (01-332 0522). Tomorrow, 9.30pm, 12. Prompt and firm reservations most desirable.

YOKO ONO: The Broken Age: A series of Saturday afternoon cinema screenings running concurrently with the exhibition. This week: *Fluxus 1966* - a collection of short, silent films by a number of Fluxus artists, edited by George Maciunas.

Riverside Studios, Orpington Road, Hammersmith, London W6 (01-748 3354). Exhibition until April 22, free. Cinema: Sat 2pm, 22 (22 concs).

STEPHEN JONES AND DAVID IZOD: Penetration: A double bill of new performance. Stephen Jones (of Dog's in Honey) explores the ideal of his father in "Neon Lights". "Fiction from New York" by David IZOD mourns the slow death of his mother through a fictional correspondence with Spalding Gray.

ICA, The Mall, London SW1 (01-930 3847). Tues until April 21 (not Sun), 8pm, 22.50, (24.00 concs), plus 21 day membership.

Compiled by Karl Knight.

► Items for inclusion should be sent at least 10 days before publication to Tony Patrick, Preview, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9ON.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2151

ACROSS

- 1 Brush Nepal soldier (6)
- 2 India/Burma bay (6)
- 3 Horned horse (7)
- 4 Relative by marriage (2-3)
- 5 Radar screen spot (4)
- 6 Chastiser (8)
- 7 Pit and pendulum author (5,5,3)
- 8 Race killing (8)
- 9 Small rodent (4)
- 10 Set (5)
- 11 Display stand (7)
- 12 International agreement (6)
- 13 Sovereign remedy (6)

DOWN

- 1 Mean (7)
- 2 Attacking suddenly (7)
- 3 Barrel band (4)
- 4 Spinal anaesthetic (8)
- 5 Soviet prison system (5)
- 6 Further down (5)
- 7 Get on with it (7,4)
- 8 Crank (8)

SOLUTION TO NO 2150

ACROSS: 1 Vice 3 Assam 8 Reunite 10 Bugle 11 Yogi 12 Bat 13 Teg 15 Berlin 16 Bred 17 Lid 18 Rail 20 Half 23 Odie 24 Glamour 25 Ready 26 Alas

DOWN: 1 Village 2 Cord 4 Sol Story 5 Angot 6 Odey 7 Weight 9 Sure thing 14 Sorry end 15 Bolt on 16 Chamois 18 Doves 21 Fire 22 Saus

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 22

LAKE WOBEGON

EFFECT

(a) Tendency to overestimate quality, from *Lake Wobegon Days* 1985 by Garrison Keillor, the town where "all the women are strong, all the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average".

AVERUNCATE

(a) To ward off, from the Latin *avere* to avert and *uncare* to ward off. A mischievous child with a mischievous look, and all the children above average.

TALMA

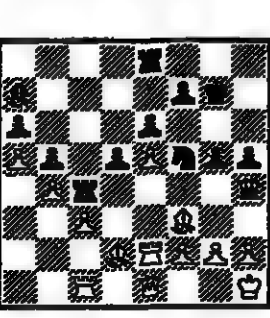
(a) A loose cloak or cape, from T. J. Talma 1763-1826), the French tragic actor: "The most beautiful part of their dress is a talma, thrown over the shoulders, fastened in front, and reaching to the knees".

MALAX

(b) To rub or knead to soften, from the Latin *malaxare* to soften: "The major, who complained that his appetite had forsaken him, massaged himself with some forty hard eggs, massaged with salt butter".

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent



This position is from the game Reshevsky (White) - Ivanovic (Black).

Schoppe 1976. How can Black break through on the king-side? Solution in tomorrow's *Times*.

Solution to yesterday's position: 1 Qxf6! Bxf6 2 exf6 and the white h pawns queens.

ENTERTAINMENTS

EVENTS

SEMI & MINERAL FAIR: Holiday Inn, Swindon, London, 14-15 April. (02921 373756).

THEATRES

ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER'S CATS: 19th April 1990/836 7888/836 7888. 19th April 1990/836 7888/836 7888. 19th April 1990/836 7888/836 7888.

OPERA & BALLET

COLLEGIUM: 836 3161 or 840 370 4444 (01-240 1066). 5 June - 7 July.

THE KIROV BALLET: 836 3161 or 840 370 4444 (01-240 1066). 5 June - 7 July.

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE: 240 1066/1011. Standby info 836 3161 or 840 370 4444 (01-240 1066). 5 June - 7 July.

SANDERS WELLS: 279 9910. 17th April 1990/836 7888/836 7888. 17th April 1990/836 7888/836 7888.

ALDWYCH (All big 836 6404)

NOW PREVIEWING: 836 6404 or 836 6404. 836 6404 or 836 6404.

MARGARET CORTNEY: 836 6404 or 836 6404. 836 6404 or 836 6404.

LOOK LOOK: 836 6404 or 836 6404. 836 6404 or 836 6404.

APOLLO: 836 6404 or 836 6404. 836 6404 or 836 6404.

TOM COTT: 836 6404 or 836 6404. 836 6404 or 836 6404.

JEFFREY BERNARD: 836 6404 or 836 6404. 836 6404 or 836 6404.

STARLIGHT EXPRESS: 836 6404 or 836 6404. 836 6404 or 836 6404.

APOLLO VICTORIA: 836 6404 or 836 6404. 836 6404 or 836 6404.

ARTS 836 2130 or 370 4444

SATURDAY NIGHT: 836 2130 or 370 4444. 836 2130 or 370 4444.

THE GEORGIAN STATE DANCE COMPANY: 836 2130 or 370 4444. 836 2130 or 370 4444.

MISS SAIGON: 836 2130 or 370 4444. 836 2130 or 370 4444.

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CHESTER FESTIVAL THEATRE

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THEATRE ROYAL, BURY ST EDMUNDS

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Nato tops agenda as Thatcher meets Bush

By Robin Oakley, Political Editor

THE future of Nato is expected to dominate talks in Bermuda tomorrow between Mrs Thatcher and President Bush.

Both are determined that US troops should continue to play a key role in Europe and Mrs Thatcher wants to discuss with the US President the most suitable form of nuclear weapons to be retained in Germany as part of Nato's strategy.

Mrs Thatcher is ready to drop her previous insistence on the modernisation of Nato's ground-launched Lance missiles, long resisted by Herr Helmut Kohl, the West German Chancellor, and Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, his Foreign Minister. It is accepted that updating would not make sense when the missiles would only reach the eastern half of a reunified Germany. Instead she is expected to urge the case for air-launched missiles.

The RAF hopes to replace the older, free-fall missiles with stand-off missiles like the American Sram-T, yet to be developed. Nato defence ministers have a planning meeting in Canada next month and there have been rumours of new proposals for weaponry from the Americans.

Mrs Thatcher and President Bush will also be discussing ways of maintaining the momentum on arms reductions after the Conventional Force Reduction talks in Vienna have been concluded. They are expected to begin outlining a Western negotiating position which will make further progress possible while safeguarding security.

Mrs Thatcher has signified her willingness to reduce British conventional forces in time if the Soviet Union withdraws completely from Eastern Europe, but she is insistent that British and

American forces will continue to be needed in a unified Germany.

The two leaders are expected to discuss ways of increasing the role of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe in building democracy and increasing human rights across Europe, without downgrading the role of Nato.

Mrs Thatcher, who will be meeting President Bush for the sixth time within a year, is unperturbed at reports that the American Administration now accords far more importance to its contacts with Bonn. Officials say that Mr Bush telephones her more than President Reagan used to do and that their relationship is close.

Preoccupation with Bonn over the past year or more is regarded as inevitable given the developments in Eastern Europe and the Bermuda meeting is seen as a contribution to getting things back onto an even keel.

The Prime Minister considers that her cautious approach to German unification has paid dividends, that suitable assurances have been won and that a more reasonable timetable is now emerging. Officials say that unification is now proceeding in a way that Western institutions are able to handle.

A key element in the talks between Mrs Thatcher and Mr Bush will be how to establish defence arrangements for the unified Germany which will not make life too difficult at home for President Gorbachev, whom Mrs Thatcher will see in Kiev in June, a week or so after his summit with Mr Bush. They will also discuss ways of encouraging a dialogue between Mr Gorbachev and the Lithuanians.

Dual role rejected, page 9

Bucket and spade time for the Princes



PRINCE Harry (centre) and Prince William (right) helping their mother, Princess Diana, in sand yesterday during their holiday on

Necker Island, in the British Virgin Islands. The picture was taken at an arranged press photocall on the second day of the holiday. The Princess of Wales

is staying on the island with her mother, Mrs Frances Shand-Kydd, her two sisters and their children while Prince Charles fishes in Scotland.

Hint on Hong Kong entry

Continued from page 1
measure to reduce substantially the period of residence required to achieve settled status and eventual citizenship would be within the total of 50,000 households covered by the Nationality Bill. The Foreign Office said Mr Hurd had been talking about an approved second scheme since dropped.

Mr Norman Tebbit, the former Conservative chairman who is leading the backbench opposition to the Bill, declined to comment on Mr Maude's remarks, but Mr Nicholas Budgen, Conservative MP for Wolverhampton South West, said he had always feared that the Bill was the thin end of the wedge.

"If the problem involves three and a half million people, and you say at the same time it is going to be substantially ameliorated by granting right of entry to a quarter of a million (50,000 heads of household) you must be rather mad or unable to count or you must believe the Bill is only the beginning of a process."

At a Hong Kong press conference, Mr Maude sought to defend his claim that up to 20 other countries were planning to offer right of abode to Hong Kong people, despite denials from representatives of nations concerned.

The minister brushed aside denials saying: "Policies are made not in consultancies-general but in national capitals. We don't go around making announcements of this sort without being clear that they reflect the wishes of the governments we refer to."

But he offered little comfort to 6,000 ethnic Indians in Hong Kong holding British Dependent Territories Passports, who will become stateless when the colony reverts to Chinese control in 1997. China recognizes only ethnic Chinese as its own nationals.

Mr Maude said they could apply, like others, for the limited British passport scheme, which gives no special priority to minorities.

Kashmir university hostages found dead

From Coom Kaper, Delhi

THE bodies of the kidnapped Vice-Chancellor of Kashmir University, Dr Musheer-ul-Haq, and his secretary, Mr Ghulam Nabi, were found yesterday on the outskirts of Srinagar city.

The Vice-Chancellor and his aide were kidnapped at gunpoint six days ago by the Jammu and Kashmir Students' Liberation Front, which demanded the release of jailed terrorists in exchange for freeing their captives.

The general manager of a government watch factory, Mr H L Khara, was found dead on Tuesday after

being kidnapped and a ransom note sent. Anger over the rising spate of killings in the troubled northern border state of Jammu and Kashmir was reflected in the Indian Parliament yesterday when two MPs belonging to the National Front Government's ally, the right wing Hindu militant Bharatiya Janata Party, demanded the resignation of the Home Minister, Mr Musti Mohammed Sayed.

Opposition members of the Congress (I) Party demanded that the Prime Minister, Mr V P Singh, step down because of his inability to control the situation in Kashmir, where the majority Muslim population, with the help of neighbouring

Pakistan, has stepped up its insurgency campaign to press for secession from India.

There were tumultuous scenes in parliament with the Congress (I) Party staging two walk-outs in protest over the absence of the Home Minister. They later criticized the inadequacy of a statement by Mr Sayed on Kashmir. The murdered men's families meanwhile expressed bitterness that, while five terrorists had been freed in exchange for the release of the Home Minister's daughter three months ago, the Indian Government had refused to appease the terrorists in the case of their slain relatives. The Prime Minister warned in

parliament on Tuesday that if Pakistan forced war on India by fanning insurgency in Kashmir, it would have to pay a heavy price.

● KARACHI: The Chief of Staff of the Pakistan Army, General Mirza Aslam Beg, has said that the Indian Prime Minister's statement calls for high state of vigilance and readiness (Zahid Hussain writes).

General Beg said at a senior officers' meeting in Rawalpindi yesterday that Pakistan could not remain complacent. President Ishaq Khan and the Prime Minister, Miss Benazir Bhutto, also met the officers and discussed defence measures on the border with India.

Walters helps Tories oppose ERM

By Nicholas Wood
Political Correspondent

BACKBENCH Tory opponents of closer monetary and political union in the European Community have been encouraged by the strong attack on the European Monetary System by Sir Alan Walters, the Prime Minister's former economic adviser.

Mr William Cash, chairman of the backbench Conservative European affairs committee, said Sir Alan had confirmed the view that enter-

ing the exchange-rate mechanism of the EMS would not solve Britain's underlying economic problems.

Mr Cash said that despite progress made in the past decade, problems continued to be low productivity, efficiency and quality. They would not be put right by the technical solution of "tinkering around with blocks of currencies".

Mr Cash said that Mr Nigel Lawson's policy of shadowing the West German Mark in

1987 and 1988 had precipitated the credit explosion and high interest rates. It was "absurd" to call for membership of a system that caused the country's economic problems in the first place.

MPs on the pro-European wing of the party dismissed Sir Alan's intervention as "last year's argument".

They said that because he coupled his distaste for the EMS with support for a single currency, his comments cannot be regarded as particularly

helpful to either side of the argument.

They believe that ministers and Tory MPs think that early British membership of the ERM is the only way to bring domestic inflation down to acceptable levels before the next election.

Mr Cash acknowledged this shift in attitude by adding that he suspected that Sir Alan had timed his intervention to stop backsliding.

Leading article, page 13

Minister accused over state of roads

By Michael Dwyer
Transport Correspondent

Mr Robert Atkins, the Under Secretary of State for Transport, was accused yesterday of trying to disguise the extent of last year's deterioration in the condition of trunk roads in England and Wales.

The accusation followed publication of the annual National Road Maintenance Condition Survey, in which Mr Atkins said the recent deterioration had been arrested, and was now back to 1977 levels.

However, contrary to Mr Atkins' statement, the survey's defects index, the Department of Transport's yardstick for measuring flaws in road surfaces, reveals an 11.2 per cent deterioration in the condition of trunk roads compared with 1977.

The defects index attempts to measure rutting, tar mac deterioration, surface cracks, and other "hazardous defects".

Mr Richard Diment, deputy director of the British Road

Federation, the national roads lobby, said: "Mr Atkins' optimistic statement does not appear to be borne out by the Department of Transport's own figures."

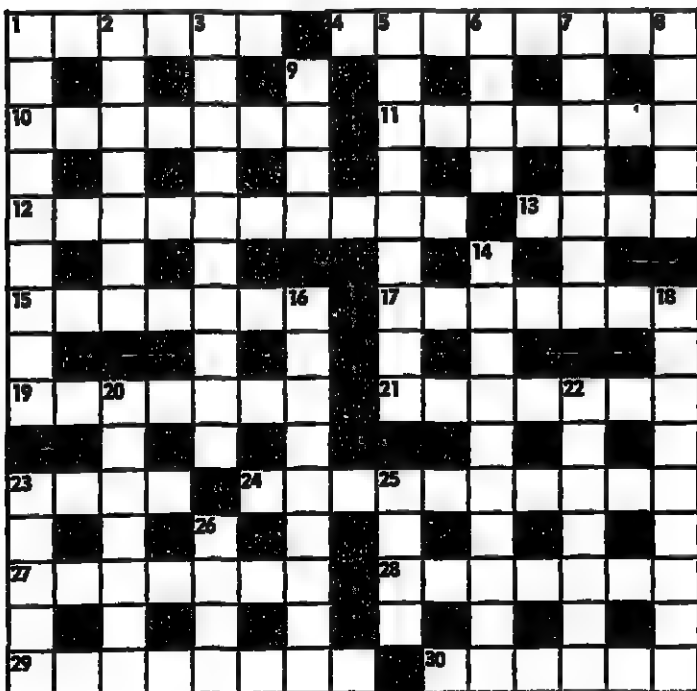
However, the blacktop road survey, which excludes motorways and concrete surfaced roads, and which is carried out jointly by the Local Authority Associations and the Department of Transport, did show that the deteriorating quality of local roads had been halted and returned to 1977 levels, an

improvement welcomed by Mr Diment.

The department yesterday rejected Mr Diment's allegations that ministers were trying to pull the wool over people's eyes. "All we are saying is that there has been a trend towards improvement similar to 1977 levels."

● Mr Atkins yesterday announced a £400 million maintenance programme for motorways, all-purpose trunk roads and bridges, for implementation during 1990-91.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO 18,266



ACROSS

- 1 Thrust to correct bad character (6).
- 4 Unemployed man - there's no assistance for him to draw (4-4).
- 10 Out at lunch - it's open (7).
- 11 What's in the bank has accumulated, naturally (7).
- 12 William and Mary agree terms - equal shares (5,5).
- 13 Ghosts, for example, flutter (4).
- 15 Basque nationalists call for rejection of issue (7).
- 17 Bottles that won't split (4,3).
- 19 Sporting author is said to be master joker (7).
- 21 I leave side convulsed with fury - Free Frenchman unjustly convicted (7).
- 23 A failure as a teacher? (4).
- 24 Certificates to discuss on return from copier rooms (10).

DOWN

- 27 County side suffers reverse - act upset about it (7).
- 28 After tea, provide some entertainment (7).
- 29 Baptise child 'Moll' (4-4).
- 30 Avenue riots in neutral city (6).
- 1 Get grass. I hear, on clothes - send for her (9).
- 2 Being in intelligence. I chanced upon a group with weapons (7).
- 3 Abandon aircraft over the sea - a very stupid measure (5-5).
- 5 Studied speaking, and passed while doing it (3-6).
- 6 Exhibition in former government office (4).
- 7 A bishop gives peace greeting - not hard to rebellious son (7).
- 8 A song for the box (5).
- 9 One wielding hammer chips bit off spine (4).
- 14 Be sure of success via the media when disposing of one product (4,2,4).
- 16 Rugby and Greyfriars school-boys join quartet (4,5).
- 18 Expression of regret for one's absence (9).
- 20 Fluster upsetting calm (7).
- 22 Pardon in fashion: I see (7).
- 23 Character once thus formed in harmony (5).
- 25 Island's measure of rainfall (4).
- 26 Honour one in the kitchen (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,265

1. IMPROPER
2. UNEMPLOYED
3. GHOSTS
4. BOTTLES
5. STUDIED
6. EXHIBITION
7. MOLL
8. SONG
9. HAMMER
10. CERTIFICATES
11. ACCUMULATED
12. WILLIAM AND MARY
13. FLUTTER
14. SUCCESS
15. NATIONALISTS
16. QUARTET
17. REJECTION
18. REGRET
19. MASTER
20. FLUSTER
21. FURY
22. PARDON
23. CHARACTER
24. DISCUSS
25. RAINFALL
26. HONOUR
27. REVERSE
28. ENTERTAINMENT
29. MOLL
30. AVENUE

Complete crossword, page 20

WEATHER

Central and eastern England, East Anglia and south-east England will have some sunshine but become rather more cloudy later. Generally rather warm over England and Wales. Windy over north-west Scotland. Northern Ireland and western Scotland will have bright intervals and blustery showers. Central Scotland and western England will be cloudy with some rain, but become brighter. Eastern Scotland: bright with some sunshine. Outlook: Unsettled.

ABROAD

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Notes
Algeria	17-22	SE	1-3	
Amman	17-22	SE	1-3	
Algiers	17-22	SE	1-3	
Amman	17-22	SE	1-3	
Amman	17-22	SE	1-3	
Amman	17-22	SE	1-3	
Amman	17-22	SE	1-3	
Amman	17-22	SE	1-3	
Amman	17-22	SE	1-3	
Amman	17-22	SE	1-3	

AROUND BRITAIN

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Notes
London	17-22	SE	1-3	
London	17-22	SE	1-3	
London	17-22	SE	1-3	
London	17-22	SE	1-3	
London	17-22	SE	1-3	
London	17-22	SE	1-3	
London	17-22	SE	1-3	
London	17-22	SE	1-3	
London	17-22	SE	1-3	
London	17-22	SE	1-3	

WORD-WATCHING

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which of the possible definitions is correct?

By Philip Howard

LAKE WOBEGON EFFECT

a. Hike from the sticks
b. Rural hypocrisy
c. A tendency to exaggerate

AVERRUNCATE

a. Having webbed fingers
b. Stunned with grief
c. To ward off

TALIMA

a. A board game
b. A system of survey
c. A theatrical cloak

MALAX

a. Counter-clockwise
b. To soften by kneading
c. Proof by elimination

Answers on page 20

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0836 401 followed by the appropriate code.

London & E traffic, roadworks
C. London (within N & S Gires), 731
M-ways/roads M4-M11 732
M-ways/roads M1-Dartford 733
M-ways/roads Dartford T-M23 734
M-ways/roads M23-M4 735
M25 London Orbital only 736

National traffic and roadworks
National motorways 737
West Country 738
Wales 739
Midlands 740
East Angles 741
North-west England 742
North-east England 743
Scotland 744
Northern Ireland 745

AA Roadwatch is charged at 5p for 8 seconds (peak and standard) 5p for 12 seconds (off peak).

LONDON

Today: Temp: max 6 am to 6 pm, 15C (59F); min 6 pm to 6 am, 7C (45F). Humidity: 6 pm, 64 per cent. Rain: 24 hr to 6 pm, nil. Sun: 24 hr to 6 pm, 5 hr. Sea, mean sea level, 6 pm, 1,008.7 millibars, falling.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Today: London (Northolt, 15C (59F); lowest 6 am to 6 pm, 7C (45F). Humidity: 6 pm, 64 per cent. Rain: 24 hr to 6 pm, nil. Sun: 24 hr to 6 pm, 5 hr. Sea, mean sea level, 6 pm, 1,008.7 millibars, falling.

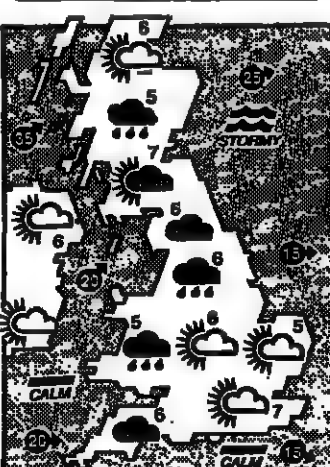
MANCHESTER

Today: Temp: max 6 am to 6 pm, 12C (54F); min 6 pm to 6 am, 7C (45F). Humidity: 6 pm, 64 per cent. Rain: 24 hr to 6 pm, nil. Sun: 24 hr to 6 pm, 5 hr. Sea, mean sea level, 6 pm, 1,008.7 millibars, falling.

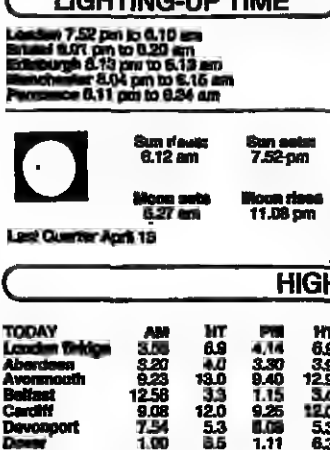
GLASGOW

Today: Temp: max 6 am to 6 pm, 15C (59F); min 6 pm to 6 am, 7C (45F). Humidity: 6 pm, 64 per cent. Rain: 24 hr to 6 pm, nil. Sun: 24 hr to 6 pm, 5 hr. Sea, mean sea level, 6 pm, 1,008.7 millibars, falling.

AM



PM



LIGHTING-UP TIME

London 7.52 pm to 6.10 am
Birmingham 6.10 pm to 6.10 am
Manchester 6.11 pm to 6.11 am

YESTERDAY

Temperature at midday yesterday: C, cloud; F, rain; S, sun; W, wind; H, humidity.

TOWER BRIDGE

Tower Bridge will be closed at 3.30 pm today.

HIGH TIDES

Area	AM	PM	HT	FT
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9
London Bridge	3.58	6.9	4.14	6.9

MOON TODAY

Information supplied by Met Office

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TEMPUS

Tesco toasts a champagne success

THE success of Sir Ian MacLaurin's strategy for Tesco, the supermarket chain, can be measured in bottles of champagne. In 10 years, five under Sir Ian's chairmanship, Tesco has moved from a cheap and cheerful food retailer ready to take on competitors in aggressive price wars to Britain's biggest purveyor of champagne.

The move upmarket has brought with it the Wine Retailer of the Year Award and five stars in the *Green Consumer's Guide*. These accolades have not been won at shareholders' expense. Pre-tax profits for the year to February rose 31 per cent to £363 million on sales up 14.5 per cent at £5.4 billion. Property profits were £35 million. Earnings per share, excluding property profits, rose 22 per cent to 13.8p and the dividend per share is up 23 per cent 4.3p. Net margins rose from 5.9 per cent to 6.4 per cent.

The question now is whether Sir Ian's strategy for the next five years will be as successful. Tesco, alone among the big five supermarket groups, has not diversified, and Sir Ian made it perfectly clear yesterday that it has no plans to do so.

J Sainsbury has Homebase, Asda has linked up with George Davies to sell clothes, Gateway has Hermans sports shops in the US, and Argill is involved in a European joint

venture. Tesco has no plans to move into non-food retailing, and geographical expansion in the next five years is unlikely.

The perceived wisdom that in five years' time the food retailing market in Britain will be saturated is one which does not wash with Tesco, which opened 22 stores last year and has 23 planned for this year. The two years after that should see a similar store-opening programme and Tesco has enough quality sites to take the business through to 1991.

Sticking to food retailing should boost the shares, and investors who have seen Sir Ian proved right on more than one occasion in the past are unlikely to suffer by backing him in the future. The shares, unchanged at 201p, are on a well-deserved p/e ratio of 12, assuming pre-tax profits of £400 million this year.

MB Group

THE recent history of MB Group is one of the strongest arguments around for the cash takeover bid. The latest management change, completing the reverse takeover by Caradon, confirms yet another likely change of direction, whatever the length of the timetable. MB will eventually metamorphose itself from a packaging group, via a non-descript pseudo-conglomerate with 25.5 per cent of CMB



Peter Jansen: leading changes at MB Group

Packaging, into essentially a building products company.

That process will have been more profitable for financial advisers than for shareholders. It has involved a messy packaging merger on questionable terms, followed by costly acquisitions of companies that will end up in management control or, probably, be resold.

That makes the intermedi-

ate nine-month results from MB even less meaningful than otherwise. Pre-tax profits were slightly disappointing at both the nominal £80 million level (producing earnings of 15.2p per share) and at the annualized pro forma £103 million. Details of acquisition timing probably explain this.

The good news is that Mr Peter Jansen, now undisputed chief executive, is highly re-

garded after a strong track record at Caradon. Given the poor UK market, there is also some temporary logic in MB's temporary shape with 45 per cent of trading profits from building products, 35 per cent from CMB and 20 per cent from US cheque printing. Less than half the business depends on UK sales.

In practice, MB is confident that building products profits will rise, bolstering City forecasts of 1990 pre-tax profits above £130 million. On that basis, the shares, at 198p, sell at about 9.5 times prospective earnings, with a pro forma yield of 5.7 per cent. However, ambitions to expand building products will require further drastic reshaping, so investment is strictly a matter of faith in the new management.

Smiths Ind

SMITHS Industries would do itself a power of good, and in turn encourage a more faithful market following, if it spent part of its £95 million-plus cash holdings on either medical systems or industrial interests and forged defence, which is knocking sentiment and has checked profits.

For the half year ended February 3, pre-tax profits rose from £47.1 million to £50.1 million on a turnover of £317.8 million (£306.9 million), and would have been higher but for defence

setbacks. A dispute over hours at its Cheltenham operation probably knocked £5 million off profits, but while that upset is now over there looms in the second half the impact of industrial action at Boeing.

Overall, aerospace and defence profits in the first half were thus down from £25 million to £22.6 million, and could be in for a bumpy ride in the second half. Meanwhile, medical systems rose from £8.16 million to £10.3 million, and profits from industrial activities from £7.2 million to £8.9 million.

Given the weakness in many business areas, Smiths could well use its balances to benefit from distress sales.

Year-end forecasts have been clipped from £125 million (against an actual £111.7 million previously) to £122 million. But 1991 forecasts of £136 million still stand.

At 222p, down 8p, the p/e ratios are 8 and 7.2 respectively. Fundamentally, Smiths interests are sound, but it needs a wider diversification away from defence to concentrate the market's mind. The shares stand at their lowest relative to the market since 1981. However, the interim dividend rises from 3.25p to 3.6p a share, payable June 8, and on a 5 per cent prospective yield for the year, they may not remain cheap for long.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

SmithKline seeks up to \$1bn in US

SMITHKLINE Beecham, the pharmaceuticals group, is planning to raise up to \$1 billion in the US. It said: "The group proposes to raise in the US, through a private placement, preference capital by the issue of between \$300 million and \$1 billion of auction-rate preference shares. The issue is scheduled for completion on or before April 30."

The company said it also intended to redeem on June 1 the \$618 million outstanding balance of the floating-rate unsecured loan stock 1990-92, issued at the time of Beecham's July 1989 merger with SmithKline. Stockholders will have the option either of receiving cash or converting their loan stock into a new stock with a later redemption date. "Together with the disposals of non-core businesses, the issue of the auction-rate preference shares is a further step in the restructuring of the finances of the enlarged group," Mr Hugh Collum, the finance director, said in the statement.

No referral of Lucas deal

THE acquisition of Metier, a part of Lockheed, by Lucas Industries will not be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, the Department of Trade and Industry has decided. RMC Group's joint venture with British Dredging and Thyssen's proposed purchase of a number of assets from Blue Circle Industries have also been given the go-ahead.

Extension for R&T halt

RUSH and Tompkins, the property and building group, has been granted an extension of its share suspension until next week. Rush is promising a further statement on its affairs next week. A 48-hour share suspension was granted on Monday after a wave of rumours swept the market that Rush was facing financial problems. The shares stood at 63p on suspension.

BWAT 17% ahead

RESULTS from Barr & Wallace Arnold Trust, the holiday, car sales and fuel distribution company, measured up to City expectations with pre-tax profits for 1989 up 17 per cent at £4.2 million on turnover of £219.5 million, 28.5 per cent up.

Earnings per share grew 21 per cent to 43.9p (36.3p) and the proposed final dividend is being raised to 12.5p to make 17.5p, 16.7 per cent up on 1988. Borrowings rose 82 per cent to £15 million to fund acquisitions and property purchases, putting gearing at 71 per cent. Mr Paul Specht, finance director, said that the company would feel more comfortable at last year's gearing of about 40 per cent. The best performer in the BWAT portfolio was the leisure and holiday division, with pre-tax profits up 119 per cent to £3 million.

Body Shop goes Japanese

BODY Shop is joining forces with the Japanese Jusco supermarket chain to sell its products in Japan under a franchise arrangement. Body Shop's first branch will open in Tokyo in the autumn with a projected sales target of 150 million yen (£80,000) in its first year. The group hopes to have about 50 outlets in the Tokyo area within five years. The shares rose 9p to 439p on the announcement.

Board moves at Regalian

REGALIAN's chairman, Mr Leonard Walton, has retired from the board. He is succeeded by Mr David Goldstone, who will also continue as chief executive. Mr Lee Goldstone, in addition to his current duties as managing director of the company's operating subsidiaries, will assume the responsibility of group managing director. Sir John Sparrow will join the board as a non-executive director.

Kingfisher debt issue

KINGFISHER is to launch a £500 million multi-currency euro-commercial paper and medium term note programme to replace an existing £150 million arrangement. Morgan Grenfell will organize the new debt and the currencies initially involved will be sterling, dollars, yen and Ecus. Others may be added later.

Standard and Poor's, the credit rating company, puts Kingfisher's euro-commercial paper at A-1 and its medium term notes at A. These ratings are on credit watch since the announcement last December of Kingfisher's bid for Dixons, the high street electrical retailer, which is presently being investigated by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Stars mentioned in Guinness trial

The final stages before Easter of the Guinness trial saw jurors contemplating the latest famous name to be raised — that of David Bowie.

The rock star's name cropped up as counsel for Mr Ernest Saunders, the former Guinness chief executive, cross-examined a witness about an address book.

Mr Richard Ferguson, QC, for Mr Saunders, gave no reason for bringing up Mr Bowie's name, on a day when the names of the footballers Gary Lineker and Terry Venables were also aired at Southwark Crown Court.

The trial heard evidence relating to an allegation that Mr Saunders destroyed documents concerning the £2.7 billion takeover of Distillers after a Government inquiry began into the 1986 bid.

Miss Melanie Burford, a secretary to Mr Saunders at Guinness, was asked which pages were original in address books in which, it is alleged, Mr Saunders had cut out entries and she had to re-type certain pages.

"For instance," asked Mr Ferguson, "Under 'B' there is the name and address of a hotel, then David Bowie." Miss Burford replied: "Yes."

"Is that the David Bowie?" Mr Ferguson asked. "Yes," Miss Burford replied.

She added that the page was original and entries included friends of Mr Saunders.

The names of Mr Lineker and Mr Venables came up when Mr Ferguson suggested to Miss Lucy Bayliss, a junior secretary, that a jotter, also alleged to have been destroyed on the orders of Mr Saunders, was his football jotting pad and that the former director of Queen's Park Rangers, made notes on scores, the club's form and players.

Miss Bayliss replied: "It could be."

Mr Saunders and three others variously deny 24 charges, including destroying company documents.

Yesterday, day 36 of the trial, saw lawyers only in court after Mr Justice Henry excused the jury the final planned day before Easter while a point of law was discussed. The case resumes on April 23.

Cannon Street up 29% to £26.5m

By Angela Mackay

HIGHER-than-expected goodwill write-offs in 1989 propelled Cannon Street Investments' gearing to 140 per cent but pre-tax profits were in line with market forecasts at £26.5 million, up 29 per cent.

The industrial holding company, which has investments spanning leisure, electronics, housebuilding and laundry, wrote off £46.5 million of goodwill, pushing gearing levels well beyond the 60 per cent analysts expected. Reduction to this level should occur if the company adheres to its policy of flotation, and directors have earmarked Cannon Street Leisure, the hotel and leisure complex business, as the next candidate.

Interest cover in 1990 is expected to drop from 14 times profit to about five times, reflecting high interest rates and the company's decision not to issue shares to fund further acquisitions.

Last year the company made four major acquisitions, worth £29.7 million, including a tour operator, Cotsworld, and Network, a consumer electronics company. They are consolidated in the balance sheet at a value of £5 million, however, as a result of the goodwill write-off.

Turnover grew from £168 million to £228 million and earnings per share from 22.57p to 24.20p. A final dividend of 5.5p takes the full year payment to 8.8p, an increase of 11.4 per cent.

Directors said the group's diverse portfolio is expected to provide sufficient strength to maintain growth in earnings.

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Michael Kemp Daily Mail



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Stuart makes way for Caradon team at MB

By Graham Searjeant, Financial Editor

ONLY four months after becoming executive chairman of MB Group at the age of 56, Mr Murray Stuart, the former Metal Box chief executive, has announced that he will retire early from the board in May.

Mr Antony Hitchens, former chairman of the Caradon bathroom fittings and building products group, which MB bought for £338 million last November, is to be non-executive chairman.

The move completes a transfer of control to former Caradon directors since Mr Peter Jansen, Caradon's chief executive, and Mr Daniel Cohen, its finance director, have already moved into these positions at MB.

Mr Jansen said Mr Stuart's departure was not due to any

policy difference. "It does not make sense, with a reasonably strong chief executive, to have an executive chairman," he said.

The move will, however, fuel City expectations that MB will become a building products group, shedding its check printing interests and the 25.5 per cent stake in CMB Packaging which stems from the merger of its original packaging operations with the French group.

Mr Jansen said he would not rush to sell the CMB stake, on which CGIP, the main French shareholder in CMB, has first option.

He added that before making strategic moves to increase the focus on building products, he planned to spend a

year merging Caradon and MB's Stelrad group and integrating the US cheque companies to cut costs.

But he said that if one of the companies he wanted to buy came on the market, quick action might have to be taken.

In the transitional nine months to end-December 1989, MB reported pre-tax profits of £80.1 million on turnover of £309 million, and is paying a 6.4p dividend, equivalent to an annual 8.5p.

On a pro forma basis, the group, as now constituted, would have made £103 million pre-tax profit after notional interest of £20 million, with £56 million from building products, £42.7 million from CMB and £24.6 million from cheques. Mr Jansen said

building products profits should rise this year despite the weak British market.

● CMB Packaging, formed from a merger of Caradon and MB Packaging in April last year, raised profits by 20 per cent on a pro forma basis to £11.28 billion (£137 million) in the year to end-December on turnover up 18 per cent to £118.1 billion. The full-year dividend is up 20 per cent to 5.4 francs gross. In the first quarter of 1990, turnover was £5.3 billion (£5.1 billion) and operating profits of £400 million showed an increased margin. MB investors, who held 16 per cent of CMB after the merger, have sold more than half.

Temps, page 24

Banker ruled unfit for trial

From A Correspondent

THE leading defendant in the most important and complex case in Manx legal history walked from court after being declared unfit to stand trial.

Mr Victor Gray, aged 66, of Beckenham Hill, Essex, was the owner of the Savings and Investment Bank which collapsed in 1982 with debts of £42 million, leaving many of the 4,000 depositors penniless.

Mr Thomas Field-Fisher QC, the acting Deemster, has spent three weeks hearing defence submissions to abandon the trial.

After considering a psychiatric report, he ruled Mr Gray would "have the greatest difficulty in defending himself, firstly on the basis of amnesia, and, secondly, and more worryingly, because of the fact that he needs a change of medication for his illness."

If he recovers he could stand trial on a fresh basis with a fresh jury or not at all, said Mr Field-Fisher.

Mr Stephen Solley QC, for Mr Gray, said his client was suffering a severe depressive illness, and could not remember many of the events leading up to the crash of the bank.

Mr Gray, with seven others, faced a total of seven charges on 52 counts, including conspiracy to defraud, falsification of accounts and fraudulent trading.

Mr Gray was bailed to appear next Tuesday at the Port Erin court for the prosecution to consider its position. The trial of the other seven continues.

Hewden gives a warning over profits

HEWDEEN Stuart, the Glasgow plant hire group, has given a warning that weak business conditions in the South of England, and lower customer spending in the merchandising division, could have an impact on this year's results.

For the year to end-January, group pre-tax profits rose from £28.3 million to £36.2 million on a turnover of £226.9 million (£201.2 million). The final dividend rises from 1.6p to 2p a share, making 2.75p (2.2p) for the year.

The year's interest charge was £4.56 million against £3.86 million and the group's gross cash flow was a record £67 million. Shareholders' funds have for the first time exceeded £100 million.

COMMENT

Double bind when land is on the slide

Not for a generation has the housing market been in such a state that companies have been forced to write down the value of their land stocks. What usually happens when land values become suspect is that the market dries up. Transactions take place only in distressed circumstances, and it can be argued that such sales are a poor guide to the market's real state. It is not, moreover, a false argument, because property dealers more than any other sector of the trading society can sniff out a distress sale just as surely as a pig finds truffles.

Companies holding land are able to talk themselves and their auditors into the view that although values in some places may have fallen, in the swings-and-roundabouts world of property, the overall value of the land bank is likely still to be higher than book value. Only when the fall in prices looks both severe and likely to be prolonged do companies consider write-downs of the kind seen among contractors this week.

In the instances of Costain and Amec, which reported yesterday, both companies can afford the write-downs without strain. Costain is totally open about the situation, writing down the value of the land stocks by £20 million. Amec is less direct, but wrote off more than £10 million. Although such write-downs affect the year's profits, they are no disaster, for when the market picks up and the land is used, they find their way right back into profits again.

The problem is not in the Amecs and the Costains, nor even in the likes of Walter Lawrence, which wrote its land down earlier this week, but in the smaller companies, without a contracting or a commercial property cushion, that are faced with the classic double bind: falling values and high carrying costs. The logical conclusion, which many companies reached in the crash of the seventies, is that as debt is inflated by rolled-up interest, land values fall. When the size of the former exceeds the value of the latter, the banks pull the rug.

Meanwhile, the Bank of England's quarterly analysis of bank advances confirms the switch in the growth in lending from persons to companies. Within the corporate sector, lending continues buoyant.

In the three months to the end of February, lending to persons rose by just 2 per cent, as in the previous quarter. Within this, lending for house purchase rose by a modest 3 per cent and "other" lending by only 1 per cent.

The picture on commercial property lending continues to be very different. Lending by the business and other services sector rose by 8 per cent, within which lending to property companies

was also buoyant at 8 per cent more, with "other services" up 9 per cent. Much of the increased lending on property appears to be by Japanese and other foreign banks. The clearers may have put the shutters down, but given the long construction cycle on property, it takes more time to turn off the taps than in most other forms of lending.

More surprising was the strong rise in lending to manufacturers, which also jumped by 8 per cent — exceeding by far the previous quarter's rise of only 3 per cent. A small part of this was takeover-related, but much of it must presumably be distress borrowing by companies living beyond their means.

Borrowing by the financial sector also shows a big jump of 7 per cent, two thirds of it by the building societies. At least, with the housing market in its present state, demand from that quarter should begin to abate.

ADT's frustration

ADT's envisaged £100 million exchangeable preference issue has proved one marathon the market was not prepared to run — certainly not in the week before Easter.

The issue, scaled down to £75 million and with the exchangeable premium into BAA shares adjusted from an anticipated 16-19 per cent range to 14.9 per cent, still allows ADT to fund part of the carrying costs of holding a 9 per cent stake in BAA. But the smaller issue will have frustrated what plans Michael Ashcroft might have had of trying on such an exercise again, and using fresh funds to buy more BAA shares.

Bankers to the issue would have it that market circumstances dictated the alteration, which was made "with reluctance, but with realism." They would argue that the issue was never planned as an international deal in isolation. Others will not be so kind.

On the rack Stateside

Suggesting to British retailers that they should think twice before moving into the US is like advising lemmings to avoid high places. The argument that the US is the biggest market in the world falls in the light of the experiences of John Menzies, Pentos, Sock Shop and others from Britain. The latest to fall victim is Tie Rack, whose US business made a £1.2 million loss last year and where 14 of its 42 shops are not trading profitably. The division will not make a profit this year. Roy Bishko, chairman, says overheads and start-up costs were higher than expected but with Tie Rack's "unique, value for money" product the business will succeed where others have failed. Where have we heard this before?

David Brewerton

Profits punctured at Kwik-Fit

By Colin Campbell

KWIK-FIT Holdings, the 636 outlet tyres and exhausts group, merely broke even in Europe and suffered profits setbacks in Britain. It ended its February 28 financial year with pre-tax profits 18.1 per cent down at £15.1 million and the shares fell 11p to 69p.

Mr Tom Farmer, chairman and chief executive, said it was the first setback in 15 years, but in the first six weeks of the current year sales had been significantly higher and profitability had improved.

Kwik-Fit is maintaining its final dividend at 1.36p, payable June 15, and holding the year's payout at 2.40p.

Kwik-Fit ended its year with net borrowings of £43 million and a gearing level of 70 per cent, which it aims to reduce to less than 50 per cent by the end of this year.

It made a £3.54 million exceptional profit on the property sales and earned £602,000 in investment income. The previous comparable gain was £969,000. This was more than offset by interest charges of £4.89 million (£1.17 million).

Continental, the West German tyre manufacturer, still holds a 13 per cent stake but there have been no talks.

Kwik-Fit's turnover last year was £193.4 million (£157.4 million). Operating profits in Britain were £15.88 million (£17.13 million), while the impact of significant additional advertising, training and reorganization costs in Europe helped knock the continent's contribution from a previous £1.52 million profit into a £10,000 operating loss.



First setback: Tom Farmer, Kwik-Fit's chairman and chief executive, yesterday

Caparo shareholders given birthday bonus

CAPARO Industries, the fast-growing engineering concern 75 per cent owned by Mr Swraj Paul's private holding company, Caparo Group, is rewarding shareholders with an extra "10th anniversary" dividend of 0.5p a share.

The surprise payout is in addition to a total dividend for 1989 of 3.1p, up 51 per cent on the previous year's 2.05p, and was unveiled as the group reported a 65 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £14.1 million on turnover up 49 per

cent to £220 million. Earnings per share rose by 47 per cent to 7.71p.

The company gave warning, however, of a slowdown in sales growth in Britain this year due to the effects of higher interest rates and dampened consumer spending on its industrial customers.

This would be offset, however, by tighter cost control, a more aggressive export policy and further US expansion, Mr Paul said.

Bid target Runciman forecasts rise of 34%

By Our City Staff

WALTER Runciman, the shipping and security equipment group resisting the second hostile bid in 18 months, has bolstered its defences against its Swedish predator, Avena, with an unexpectedly strong profits forecast.

After hitting back at Avena's £47.8 million bid last month with a 38 per cent rise in 1989 pre-tax profits to £5.6 million, Runciman, a former Telfos Holdings target, has

forecast 1990 pre-tax profits up by not less than 34 per cent to £7.5 million, giving a 20p dividend after earnings of 53p.

On such figures, Avena's 520p-a-share offer would represent an exit multiple of just 9.8 times — a figure that Mr Runciman, chairman, dismissed as "ridiculously low." The average multiple in the UK shipping sector is 11.

Avena owns, or has acceptance for, 33.2 per cent.

Loss for words

READERS with long memories will remember the virtual impossibility of keeping George Davies off a television screen, or away any other source of publicity. But David Jones, his successor at Next, and the man who engineered his removal, is a far more shy and retiring type. There were undignified scenes outside the Next press conference on Tuesday as Mr Jones refused interviews with no fewer than four TV crews there. In what was described by my informant as "an intricately planned and well-executed manoeuvre" a luckless public relations man was sent out of the front door of Founders' Hall as a decoy while a bashful Mr Jones made his escape out of the back, to be pursued by the cameras until he made his escape in a Bentley. The TV men were already angry that they had been shut out of the conference, apparently because their presence was thought to be disruptive. Why no interviews? "It's the company's view that they have comprehensive contact with the media, and the chief executive is always available," said a spokesman. Oddly enough, this attack shyness coincided with losses of £46.7 million at Next — I wonder, in the time-honoured words, if the two could be related?

Picking up

THE huge rise in company failures is awful news — unless you happen to be an accountant or lawyer paid to pick up

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Tales of old Holborn

CONCERNED shareholders in Mrs Fields, the cookie company, might do well to keep an eye on its large store in Holborn — should the shutters go up, its problems are liable to run deep. The store is the pride and joy of Randy Fields, husband of the lovely Mrs Fields and known for his

firmly-held opinions. Its sentimental value dates back to his days as a law graduate at the Polytechnic of Central London, just across the road, where he was president of the Students Union. At that time the store was a greasy spoon cafe where the young Mr Fields regularly supped.

the pieces. Tim Hayward, Peat Marwick's senior UK corporate recovery (i.e. receivership) partner, tried hard — if not always successfully — to look gloomy as he revealed the firm's survey finding of a doubling of receiverships in a year. Tactfully, he made little of Peat Marwick's own move from number three in the receivership stakes to number two behind Coopers & Lybrand/Cork Gully and ahead of Grant Thornton. It just so

happened that Peat Marwick, apparently gearing up for its increased workload, is in the middle of moving into its spacious new offices in Salisbury Square off London's Fleet Street and, at the moment Mr Hayward was detailing the bad news, hundreds of brand-new office chairs were waiting to enter the building.

Food for fork

SOMETHING was missing yesterday at the lunchtime presentation of annual results for Barr and Wallace Arnold Trust, of Leeds. The family-run firm entertained analysts and press at Eastcheap's Watermen's Hall. More accustomed to dead things on sticks and rabbit food at such events, the party tucked into Northern helpings of stew with mushy peas. The company had wanted to serve steak-and-kidney pudding, but it was felt this would be too difficult to manage standing up. But the carpet took on a greener hue as the battle of the fork and pea was fought and lost.

Potato riddle

THERE are dark deeds afoot in the potato futures market, Watson. The price of a tonne of spuds has shot ahead to more than £230, some £50 or £60 in excess of the normal level at this time of year, and suspicious fingers are being pointed towards the Continent.

"There's a consortium in Holland and France which has ramped the Dutch market," says one observer. "It has also ramped the French market, and it now looks like it is doing the same thing here." The potato futures market is mainly used by small farmers as a means of hedging ahead, and there are fears at the Baltic Futures Exchange that they could be driven out. "It's such a small market, and quite frankly, it is disintegrating," said one aggrieved investor.

● THE last time — in both senses of the words — I visited Corney & Barrow's restaurant in Moorgate, the service was hopeless, while conversation which might have whiled away the waiting hours was rendered impossible because of customers baying for the attention of the waitress (singular). Now tables at the Moorgate restaurant, and at its sister establishment at Cannon Street, are to be fitted with a service button to summon the waiter. "We don't always get it right, and wrong, we find out as soon as possible," says Christopher Brown, the company's charming managing director. We shall see.

Martin Waller



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In fact, the AGM will be asked to approve a total dividend distribution of FF244 million a 105% increase over last year.*

Turnover increased by 18%, of which 5.4% was organic growth.

Operating profit rose by 23% to FF2,084 million and represents 9.8% of turnover compared to 9.3% in 1988.

Operating profit after interest grew by 20% to FF1,531 million, 7.2% of turnover compared to 7.0% in 1988.

Net profit before exceptional items and amortisation of goodwill has increased by 17% to FF947 million. Net margin on turnover

was 4.4%. Net profit attributable to shareholders, comprising the capital gains on the partial disposal of the CMB Steel Division, amounts to FF1,132 million and represents a net margin of 5.3% of turnover.

Despite the new shares issued, net earnings per share rose by 5.4% to FF13.6 (FF17.1 including the exceptional gain on the disposal of the CMB Steel Division representing an increase of 32%).

The prognosis?

A very healthy one year old with plenty of room for further development.

For more information contact the Corporate Communications Department, CMB Packaging; 211 Rue du Noyer, 1040 Brussels. Tel: (322)7398327 or (322)7398311.

1989 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (in FF million)

	CMB* 1989	CMB* Pro forma 1988	% increase
Turnover	21,316	18,111	+18%
Operating profit	2,084	1,689	+23%
% of turnover	9.8%	9.3%	
Net profit attributable to shareholders	1,132	775	+46%
% of turnover	5.3%	4.3%	
Net income per share in FF	17.1	12.9	+32%
Proposed dividend per share in FF**	3.6	3.0	+20%



Europe's leading packaging group.

Proudfoot profits rise 40% to £38m

THE ALEXANDER Proudfoot management consultancy lifted pre-tax profits by 40 per cent to £38.3 million in 1989 on turnover up 46.3 per cent to £143.4 million.

The profit increase reflects organic growth of 23 per cent and a contribution from Philip Crosby Associates, the Florida quality consultant, bought in March, 1989.

The final dividend is improved to 7.5p (3.5p), making 11.25p — up 104 per cent. Undiluted earnings per share climbed from 27.1p to 37.3p, while fully-diluted earnings rose from 25.4p to 34.6p.

Lord Stevens of Ludgate, the chairman, said the group continues to generate substantial cash surpluses in excess of operating requirements and has no net debt. The current year has started well, with trading substantially ahead of last year. The shares fell by 10p to 305p on the news.

Waterford gain

Waterford Foods, the Irish dairy food group which is quoted on the USM, reports a 41.3 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £181.1 million (£111 million for 1989) on turnover up 17 per cent to £1,278.9 million. Earnings per share rose 23 per cent to 17.62p. There is a final dividend of 11.35p per ordinary share, making 17.25p (10.525p). The final dividend on the B is 10.525p, making 10.525p (none last time).

Nurdin up 8%

The Nurdin & Peacock cash-and-carry wholesaler reported pre-tax profits of £22.6 million for 1989, 8.4 per cent up. Turnover expanded to £1.13 billion (£1.02 billion). Earnings per share rose from 11.3p to 12.5p and a final dividend of 2.92p makes 4.6p (4p). The shares slipped 4p to 145p on the news.

Touche chief

Mr John Roques is to become managing partner and chief executive of Touche Ross from next Monday. Mr Michael Blackburn becomes chairman of the board of partners. Mr John Connolly succeeds Mr Roques as partner in charge of the London and southern offices.

£130m project

Ford Sellar Morris Properties and the Berisford Property Group have established a joint venture to build a £130 million office development in Western Avenue, north-west London, on the London-to-Oxford route. The 10.5 acre site was bought from Unigate for £16 million.

Plan dropped

Tranwood, the USM financial services company headed by Mr Peter Earl, has dropped last December's plans for a corporate reconstruction. Tranwood's shares have fallen in value by 45 per cent since the plan was announced, when they were trading at about 43p. The shares firmed by 3p to 26p on the news.

Bond Corp falls £352.6m into red at half time

From David Tweed, Sydney

BOND Corporation Holdings, the linchpin of Mr Alan Bond's flagging empire, has reported an interim net loss of Aus\$758.15 million (£352.6 million), against an Aus\$152.78 million profit last time, and confirmed it has debts of Aus\$6.67 billion.

There is no interim dividend, compared with 8 cents last time, on a 80-cent loss per share, against earnings of 32.8 cents. Sales revenue fell to Aus\$3.75 billion (Aus\$4.81 billion).

The loss, rivalled in size only by the record Aus\$862.5 million interim loss reported last month by Bell Resources Limited, its 58 per cent-owned subsidiary, stacks up against Bond Corp's 1988-89 full-year loss of Aus\$814.1 million, and stands as Australia's third-biggest corporate loss.

Bond Corp's loss, was caused by huge write-downs of the carrying value of its assets, chiefly an Aus\$404.1 million provision for the value of its 52 per cent interest in Bond Media, owner of Australia's National Network Nine television station.

Bond Corp's other listed subsidiaries also reported results yesterday. Bell Group posted a loss of Aus\$124.92 million, while JN Taylor Holdings lost Aus\$17.26 million in the six months to end-December. Bond Corp said its



Bond: third-biggest loss

debt level stood at Aus\$7.35 billion at December 31. This has since been reduced to Aus\$6.67 billion. During the reporting period, asset sales of Aus\$1.62 billion cut debt by Aus\$722.8 million.

The end-of-year figure did not include the sale of its stake in Compania de Telefonos de Chile, the Chilean Square property site in Sydney, and the proposed sale of its brewing assets to BRL.

No provision was made for the Aus\$500 million damages claim Bond Corp has filed against the West Australian State Government Insurance Commission over the ill-fated Kwinana Petrochemical deal.

In addition, the result did not account for damages it hopes to be paid as a result of the appointment, and subsequent overruling of that

appointment, of a receiver-manager to Bond Brewing Holdings, its brewing arm. The Full Bench of the Victorian Supreme Court overruled the appointment, but said Bond Corp could not claim damages.

Bond Corp is disputing that part of the ruling in the High Court of Australia.

Other write-downs included Aus\$77.4 million on property, Aus\$42 million on the value of radio licences held by Bond Media, a net loss of Aus\$11.2 million on the sale of its petroleum interests, and provisions of Aus\$30.6 million against the carrying value of petroleum exploration expenditure.

The Aus\$758.2 million operating loss, was struck on operating revenue of Aus\$3.9 billion.

The loss figure compares with Bond Corp's Aus\$152.8 million profit for the six months to end-December, 1988.

Interest paid on its debt during the period was Aus\$548 million.

Bond Corp said it might be required to make a substantial provision against the value of G Heileman Brewing, its US brewer, at year-end. G Heileman's book value is Aus\$532.5 million.

Directors will not make a provision for the loss on its investment in British Satellite Broadcasting Limited (BSB).



No light at end of tunnel yet: Edward Bental at the Kingston upon Thames site

Bentalls slides below £4m as slump in housing bites

By Melinda Wittstock

BENTALLS, the chain of department stores, has become the latest retailer to succumb to a depressed housing market and slackened consumer spending, especially in the South-east, where its shops are located.

Pre-tax profits for last year slipped from £4.8 million to £3.86 million on turnover down from £74.7 million to £71.9 million, mainly as a result of a 7.5 per cent sales slump in its household appliances, electricals, carpets and furniture departments.

Earnings per share fell from 7.24p to 5.59p, but the board

has raised the total dividend by 10 per cent to 3.85p (3.5p) in recognition of the asset value of its 100-store shopping centre being built in Kingston upon Thames, Surrey.

Bentalls will own 23.59 per cent of the new centre, with Woolwich Union, its builder, owning the balance.

The centre is due to open in September, 1992, but Bentalls' new wholly-owned department store on the site will open this July.

The group, which has not had its properties valued since 1965, is to proceed with an asset valuation this year. Mr

Edward Bental, the chairman, said this would result in a "substantial surplus."

But despite continued efforts to cut costs, down by 7 per cent last year, Mr Bental predicted a gloomy 1990.

He said: "The combination of the new uniform business rate, continued high interest rates and a cautious Budget leaves little room for optimism for the current year."

Bentalls said the uniform business rate would result in a 27 per cent rise in rates, shaving about £300,000 off pre-tax profits in the current year.

Connell profit nearly halved

By Our City Staff

CONNELL, the estate agent, has emerged from the year to end-December with a pre-tax profit of £4.4 million, down from £8.7 million last time.

The total dividend is maintained at 9p a share for the year, out of earnings down from 26.84p to 11.88p.

Commissions and fees fell from £36.2 million to £31.2 million. The board claimed a record contribution from the commercial division and a better performance from the residential operations than other estate agents.

On prospects, Connell said that an improvement at the half year, over last time, is expected.

In the residential division, Connell says there was "some improvement in market activity at the beginning of the current year, reflecting both unsatisfied demand following the recession and the part closing of the affordability gap" between falling house prices and rising incomes. This, it predicted, will bring the first-time buyer back into the market.

The shares fell 5p to 160p.

Victaulic buy

VICTAULIC has acquired the engineering products division of the Parkfield Group for £9.3 million — £7.4 million in ordinary shares and £1.9 million in cash. Lazard Brothers has agreed to place or underwrite the 1.97 million shares, which will represent 9.1 per cent of the enlarged capital.

Surge in profits at Systems

By Philip Pangalos

SYSTEMS Reliability Holdings, the acquirive computer dealing and telephone systems group, has revealed a surge in pre-tax profits to £7.86 million in the year to end-December, against a restated £1.36 million last time.

The results benefited from acquisitions, restructuring and organic growth.

Earnings per share jumped from 3.32p to 12.76p. The final dividend is improved to 1.5p (1p), making 2.25p for the year, up from 1p.

Turnover, boosted by acquisitions, soared from £24.1 million to £134.6 million. Interest payments rose from £12,000 to £1.36 million. Gearing is about 40 per cent.

Mr Robert Evans, who became head of SRH in late 1988 and has since turned it round, said that margins had improved, helped by the mix of products being sold.

The personal computer division contributed £3.14 million to operating profits, on turnover of £50.6 million. As reported in *The Times* last month, SRH plans to dispose of the Corporate Computers dealerships business.

COMPANY BRIEFS

WILLIAM SINDALL (Fin) Pre-tax: £2.48m (£2.68m) EPS: 23.56p (28.42p) Div: 4.5p, mkg 6p (5p)	Turnover climbed by 12 per cent to £67.5m. There is an exceptional debt of £1.33m. Rental income increased by 21 per cent to £11.6m.
MUSTERLIN GROUP (Fin) Pre-tax: £0.38m (£1.12m) EPS: 0.16p (11.92p) Div: 1p, mkg 2.25p (4p)	Interest costs rose by £448,000 to £714,000. A primary objective is to reduce overheads and the level of group borrowings.
PETROCON GROUP (Fin) Pre-tax: £1.30m (£0.45m) EPS: 4.74p (1.94p) Div: 0.75p, mkg 1.25p	No dividend last year. Turnover increased by 10 per cent to £9.1m. The group's net cash position improved from £2.7m to £5.2m.
TUDOR (Fin) Pre-tax: £0.28m (£0.85m) EPS: 8.94p (7.30p) Div: 1.7p, mkg 2.2p	Last year's total dividend was 2.57p. Turnover slipped from £12.5m to £11.8m. Trading is still being affected by high interest rates.
PARAMEX (Fin) Pre-tax: £0.13m (£0.17m) EPS: 1.64p (1.81p) Div: 1p, mkg 1.5p (1.5p)	Net asset value up 20.2 per cent to £22.2p a share. Increased investment income offset by fall in art-dealing income and higher interest costs.

WORLD MARKET INDICES

Index	Value	Daily chg %	Yearly chg %	Daily chg p	Yearly chg p
The World	708.9	-0.4	-15.8	0.2	-11.5
(free)	156.8	-0.4	-15.8	0.1	-11.5
EAPE	1227.2	-0.4	-21.2	-0.2	-16.1
(free)	125.9	-0.4	-21.5	-0.3	-16.3
Europe	735.0	0.0	-3.4	-0.2	-3.6
(free)	153.4	0.0	-3.1	-0.4	-3.5
Nth America	510.7	-0.4	-5.1	0.2	-3.3
Nordic	1489.9	-0.3	-4.3	-0.3	-4.2
(free)	235.8	-0.2	0.3	-0.2	0.3
Pacific	2726.4	-0.6	-31.3	-0.1	-23.6
Far East	3938.8	-0.6	-31.9	-0.1	-24.1
Australia	302.1	-0.9	-13.0	-0.6	-8.8
Austria	2080.3	-1.5	40.0	-1.7	41.4
Belgium	912.7	0.3	-7.3	0.1	-7.9
Canada	533.7	-0.8	-11.1	-0.1	-9.0
Denmark	1344.5	0.2	2.1	0.0	1.3
Finland	104.7	-0.2	-9.2	-0.1	-9.1
(free)	142.9	-0.7	-10.6	-0.6	-10.9
France	840.4	1.3	3.9	1.0	3.2
Germany	887.6	-0.6	5.4	-1.0	8.4
Hong Kong	2290.0	0.2	3.2	0.8	5.0
Italy	392.3	0.2	-0.8	0.1	-1.7
Japan	4132.8	-0.7	-33.0	-0.2	-25.0
Netherlands	893.0	-0.3	-5.6	-0.6	-4.9
New Zealand	87.3	-1.6	-15.3	-1.3	-11.4
Norway	1525.4	-0.8	13.6	-0.6	14.6
(free)	266.9	-0.6	14.3	-0.4	15.2
Sing/Malay	1942.2	1.2	-2.6	1.6	-2.0
Spain	200.7	0.2	-15.2	0.1	-15.8
Sweden	1584.1	-0.4	-9.7	-0.3	-9.5
(free)	224.7	-0.5	-7.2	-0.3	-7.0
Switzerland	862.6	-0.5	-5.7	-0.7	-7.4
(free)	132.1	-0.4	-5.3	-0.7	-7.1
UK	858.9	-0.1	-8.9	-0.1	-8.9
USA	461.2	-0.4	-4.6	0.2	-2.8

(All Local currency)

Source: Morgan Stanley Capital International



General Accident

Financial Highlights 1989

- Shareholders' funds up 32% to a record £2,552m
- Pre-tax profits of £147.0m despite the impact of Hurricane Hugo and other major catastrophe losses (1988: £294.1m)
- Investment earnings up 31% to £462.7m
- Life profits substantially higher at £26.9m
- Net assets per share up from 915p to 1198p
- Earnings per share 65.3p (1988: 107.6p)
- Total dividend up 13.6% to 50.0p per share
- General premium income up 21% to £3,100m
- Life premium income up 30% to £381m

"The new decade promises a period of significant change, which will affect many of the markets in which we operate. Our strategies and structures are accordingly under comprehensive review, to support further profitable advancement based on the considerable financial strength of the Corporation."

NELSON ROBERTSON,
CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER

In his Annual Statement to shareholders, the Chairman, The Earl of Airlie, pays tribute to Mr B. C. Marshall, who retired as Chief General Manager of General Accident on 31st December 1989. Lord Airlie says: "Over a period of more than eight years under Mr Marshall's leadership, the Corporation achieved outstanding business development and financial growth." Mr K. N. Robertson has been appointed Chief General Manager in succession to Mr Marshall.

The Chairman also welcomes Mr Barrie Holder to the Board. Mr Holder was appointed a Director and General Manager of the Corporation on 1st April 1990.

Referring to the Board's policy of dividend progression, Lord Airlie says this takes into account not only the earnings fluctuations experienced in the composite insurance market but also the Corporation's financial strength and the underlying quality of its insurance portfolios.

Lord Airlie concludes his Statement on a confident note: "Despite more difficult market conditions, and the occurrence of further storm losses this year, the Corporation is, with its strong financial base, well placed to face the future with confidence."

In his Operational Review for 1989, Mr Nelson Robertson, Chief General Manager, says that adherence to a disciplined yet responsive approach to underwriting has enabled General Accident to absorb adverse developments in the UK market without a serious effect on overall performance. This approach will continue within a strategy designed to achieve profitable growth whilst maintaining high standards of customer service.

Mr Robertson also sees signs for encouragement overseas. General Accident has again outperformed the market in both North America and the increasingly important Pacific region. And with new branch offices planned for Portugal and Spain it will be established in all the principal European Community markets.

Life operations had a good year, Mr Robertson says, with increased bonus declarations ensuring that General Accident policyholders continue to share in the prosperity and strength of its Life fund. Estate agency operations, on the other hand, had a very difficult year, although they continue to produce a substantial volume of new life assurance business.

Mr Robertson concludes on a cautious but confident note. The prospects for early underwriting improvement are uncertain but the Corporation remains well placed to benefit from any upturn in the market, he says.



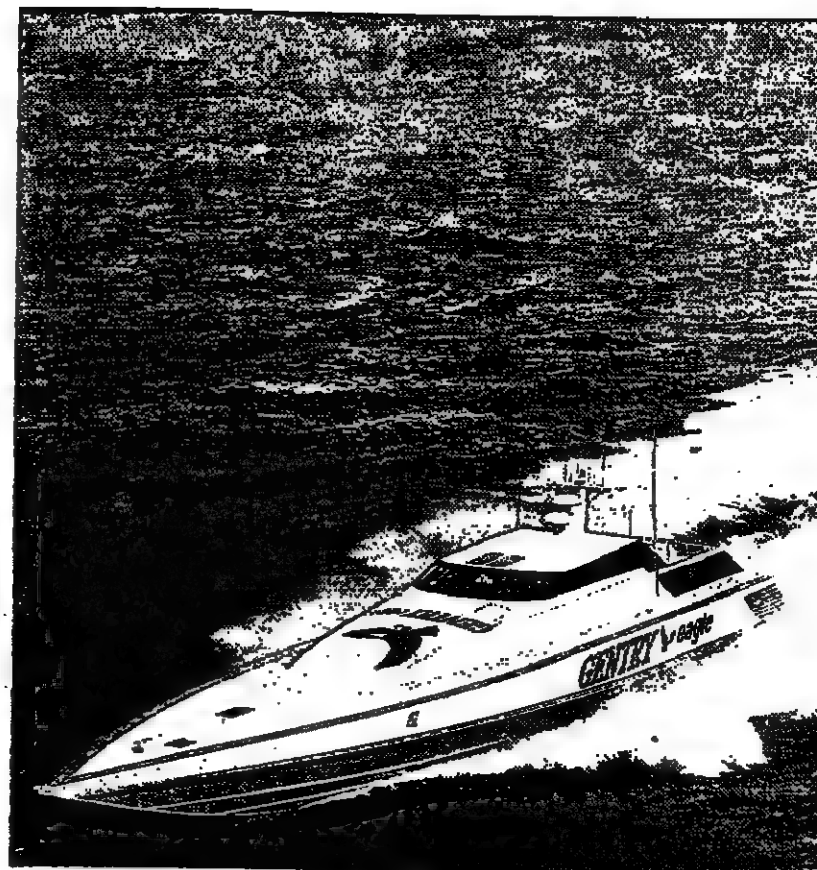
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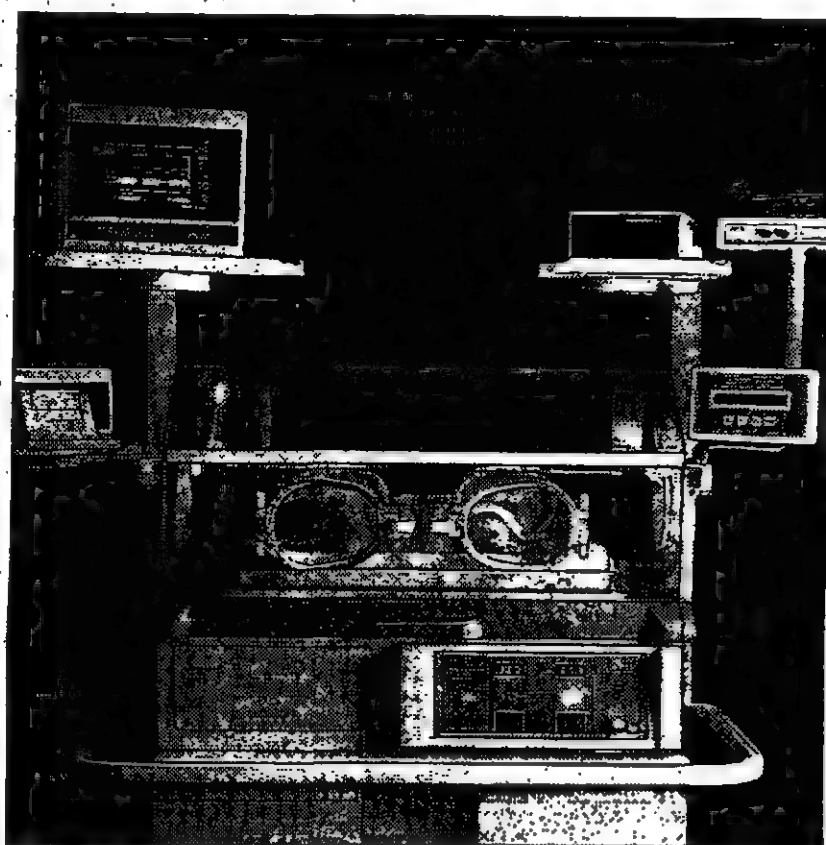
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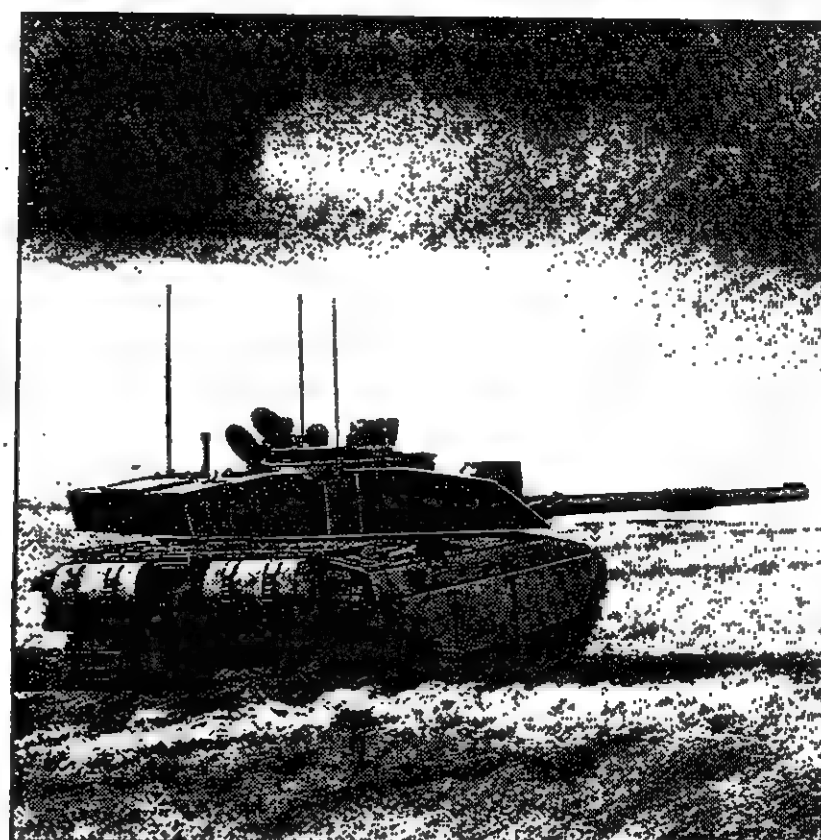
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We build the Rolls-Royce motor car - a universal byword for excellence.

Our recently-acquired subsidiary Cantieri Riva makes luxury powerboats which enjoy the same sort of reputation among the discriminating and the nautically-inclined.

Our marine interests include some of the most sophisticated civilian and defence engineering manufacturers in the world, including Sweden's KaMeWa, which provided the water jets for the Atlantic record-breaker Gentry Eagle.

Our Medical Division is the world leader in baby incubators as well as producing patient monitoring systems and diagnostic equipment. All fields in which quality of design and manufacture can often be - quite literally - matters of life or death.

Our aerospace components operations are among the tiny handful of companies in the world

equipped to create and shape the super-alloys on which modern aircraft engines depend.

And our Defence Systems Division, which numbers eighteen countries among its customers, is currently demonstrating Challenger 2 - the most advanced main battle tank in the world.

Vickers has established itself as a world leader in quality engineering through its strategy of building international businesses which have strong brands and premium products. But does our financial performance measure up to the quality of our products?

Judge for yourself.

Over the past six years, our pre-tax profits have grown steadily from £19.5 million to £83.6 million.

Earnings per share have risen with much the same consistency from 5.6p to 23.3p, a compound annual growth rate of 27%.

And the future looks no less encouraging.

In an increasingly volatile business environment, there's no safeguard more effective than having - and being recognised as having - the highest standards in the market.

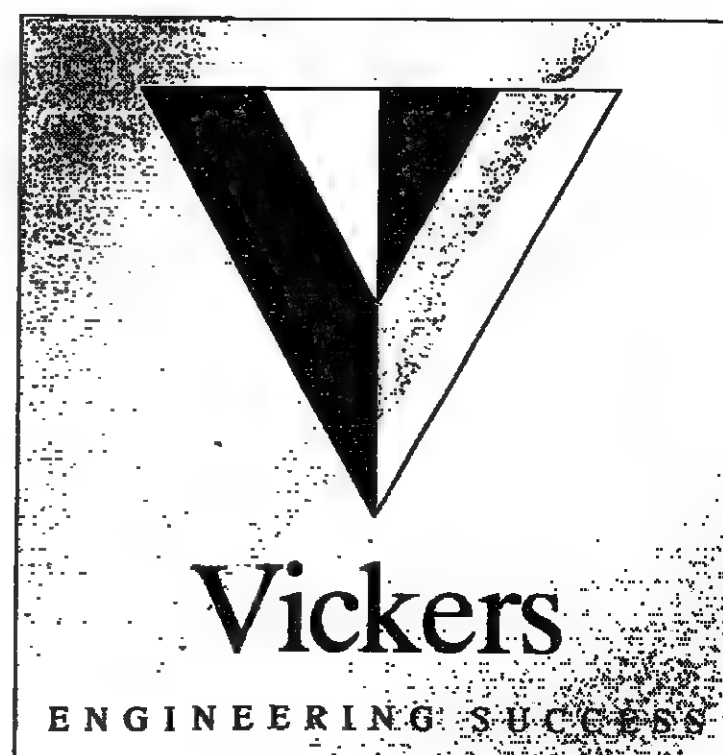
Behind this confidence lies a single-minded and continuing commitment to investing in a balanced

range of companies where the Vickers expertise, resources and philosophy of product excellence can maximise customer satisfaction, career opportunities and shareholder value.

It's an unashamedly traditional, painstaking business philosophy.

But when it comes to creating lasting success, as opposed to short-term gains, can you think of a better approach?

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Sensors seek a practical role

The perennial problem of how to exploit discoveries of academic research seems to be worsening, judging by the preliminary conclusions of a major study of science policy by Dr James Fleck and Dr David Edge, of Edinburgh University.

They are investigating the fashionable subject of artificial intelligence (AI), which received a substantial injection of cash under the Government's much criticized Alvey programme, and the extent to which the results of that research are ready for practical application.

Dr Fleck says a process of technology "transformation" is needed first, rather than the accepted idea of technology "transfer", because the methods, tools and languages that have been used by the academics are usually unsuited to those of the industrial development teams.

Artificial neural networks are a new kind of electronic computer circuit (or software simulation) that attempts to mimic the behaviour of neurons, the nerve cells of the brain, and the axons, or nerve fibres, which link them together in intricate patterns.

The advantage offered by artificial neural networks over more conventional AI techniques, such as expert systems, is that instead of having to be programmed, they learn how to solve problems.

Neural network research has been going on for more than 40 years. As one sceptic recently put it: "Neural networks are the technology of the future: always have been, always will be."

Delivery of practical applications has been hampered by academic politics. In 1968 Marvin Minsky and Seymour Papert, two eminent American scientists from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, claimed that neural network theory was fundamentally flawed, and US government funding dried up for more than a decade. In Britain a report by Sir James Lighthill abruptly ended funding of academic research by the Science Research Council.

Last year, neural network researchers were overjoyed when the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency announced long-term funding in excess of \$400 million (£244 million) — but even this has now been reviewed in the drive to cut public spending.

Real commercial applications are starting to emerge. Interestingly, a transformation has taken place in the nature of applications. Almost all the academic research projects have applied neural networks to

Neural networks may be more efficient than humans in booking flights or deciding your credit rating,

Richard Pawson says

solving so-called "real world" problems — giving computers and robots the kinds of senses that humans and animals enjoy.

The goal is very laudable, but fraught with problems. "The real world," complained one researcher, "is a very messy kind of place from a computer's viewpoint."

Which is probably why most of the commercial applications for neural networks operate entirely inside the "squeaky-clean" environment of a corporate computer system — where all the information is well-structured and largely reliable.

Some of the largest such computer systems in the world are airline booking systems. As recent television documentaries have revealed, flights are deliberately overbooked by airlines because such a high percentage of booked passengers who fail to turn up. Major airlines employ mathematicians to predict how far they can safely overbook before running the risk of having to prevent some passengers boarding.

A new computer programme, Airline Marketing Tactician, employs neural network principles to the same job. Two airlines that have tested the software report a significant improvement in flight profitability.

Another industry where profitability is heavily dependent upon marginal human judgement is credit approval. Authorizations for credit card transactions are now substantially automated, but authorization for new cards, or for mortgages or personal loans, is not. If the credit controller is too cautious in an assessment (based on information such as age, salary, and past payment record), the finance company will lose good business and more goodwill. If controllers are insufficiently cautious, the company will be faced with repayment defaults.

By learning from a history of thousands of real applications, a package based on neural networks can make significantly better judgments than human experts using conventional credit-scoring techniques.

Citicorp in the USA is evaluating the system for mortgage loan applications, but has yet to report on its findings.

Insurance and pension companies are also experimenting, with the goal of being able to predict the likelihood of a policy holder's life expectancy.

There is no shortage of past examples to learn from — but humans are very bad at detecting subtle patterns in large quantities of data, and conventional computer-based statistical techniques make gross simplifications.

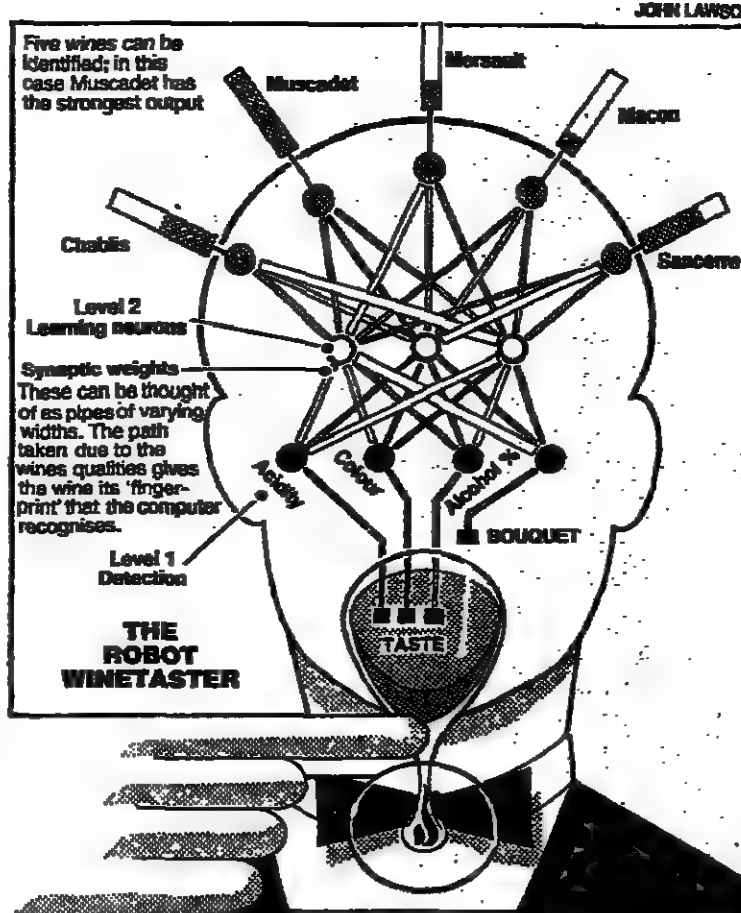
Given the potential commercial advantage offered by neural networks in this field, companies are reluctant to disclose the results of their research; the Swiss Life & Pensions Company in Zurich, for example, has published its initial findings in this field, but remains tight-lipped concerning more recent developments.

It would be wrong to suggest that academic research applications into neural networks are not leading to practical applications. Within two to three years, at least one product should have made it to market.

In Finland, Professor Teuvo Kohonen, at Helsinki University, claims to have developed the world's first phonetic typewriter, capable of transcribing normal speech — provided that your normal speech is Finnish, whose orthography is somewhat more phonetic than English.

It is almost impossible to obtain accurate information on Professor Kohonen's system because the patents have been bought by the Otsa Corporation in Japan, which has another reasonably phonetic language.

British Telecom is sponsoring several neural network research projects, including one for video telephones. To transmit a full motion video picture currently requires between 10 and 1,000 times the bandwidth of an ordinary telephone line — depending on the quality required. Consumers would be unwilling to pay more than double the cost of a normal telephone call for the privilege of seeing their caller. A neural network, however, could be based on the idea that most of the dynamic information in a person's face is conveyed by the eyes and mouth. If it was possible to track those features, then they could be transmitted, say, 20 times a second, with the rest of the face updated only once a second. Although the results are promising, a usable system is still some years away.



THE WINE TASTER WITHOUT A PALATE

MOST current neural network projects relate either to computer vision or to voice processing, including speech synthesis and speech recognition, but there are also projects relating to smell, taste and touch. The idea is to enable computers to learn to interpret the real world — and so acquire the kind of common sense abundant in a child aged five, but seriously lacking in all computer systems.

One such system could be used as a wine taster. The network contains 12 neurons, arranged in three layers, connected together by a total of 27 "synaptic weights". The network would learn how to classify wines by being repeatedly trained on a trial set of examples.

When a known wine is presented to the input sensors, the network will initially be likely to produce a random output that is wrong — identifying a Muscadet as a Chablis, for instance. The human trainer then advises the correct answer and the network makes a small adjustment to the strength of each synaptic weight, or connection, which has contributed to the wrong answer.

After several hundred training examples the network should be able to arrange its synaptic weights to give a correct classification with unknown samples of wine.

Although this may sound far-fetched, a team of researchers at Warwick University has been developing a similar system to assist in quality control for beer production in a brewery.

There is already a wide range of speech-recognition devices, ranging from sophisticated toy robots to add-on boards for personal computers, and the technology is being used in real applications from parcel sorting to telephone ticket sales.

But current technology copes only with isolated word recognition: it requires the speaker to leave pauses between words. Continuous speech, the way we speak to each other, generates too many ambiguities for conventional computer algorithms. Work on usable systems is, however, progressing.

As for the wine taster, what of the potential market for a pen-sized device that could be dipped into a glass, thus apparently allowing the owner to identify the wine "blindly"?

SCIENCE REPORT

Turning over an old leaf

The genetic material, DNA, has been successfully extracted from a plant specimen which is more than 17 million years old. The DNA, taken from the fossilized leaf of an extinct species of magnolia by Edward Golenberg, of the University of California, Riverside, and colleagues, is the oldest intelligible piece of genetic information ever found. The previous record-holder came from a 13,000-year-old mummified piece of skin from a ground sloth.

The researchers describe their remarkable feat in today's *Nature* (vol. 344, pp. 656-658). The new research will not allow the re-animation of mammoths, dinosaurs or other extinct creatures. It is important, however, because it will allow palaeontologists and molecular biologists to kiss and make up after a long estrangement.

Palaeontologists use the record of fossils to work out the course of evolution. The ages of fossil-bearing geological strata are used to rank fossil forms in order of their chronological appearance. In this way, scientists can work out which prehistoric creatures lived at particular times and so speculate on evolutionary family trees.

In an important sense, palaeontologists work from the trunk of the evolutionary tree upwards to the twigs. Molecular biologists do things differently: like Spike Milligan's monkeys in *The Bad, the Ugly and the Beautiful*, they wait for trees to reach them before they could invent the art of climbing down, they start with the twigs — the most recent creatures — and work downwards to the trunk.

By comparing the varying sequences of the genes of animals and plants alive today, they can judge which is more closely related to what, and so reconstruct the

evolutionary tree. The catch is that there is no easy way to establish the time at which any two twigs diverged from a common stem.

Although there are several ways of doing this in theory, the only sound way is to calibrate the branching order against the fossil record. This leads to trouble if the two lines of evidence disagree.

Researchers have wondered whether fossilized genes might be recovered that could settle the matter. The new work is a creditable stab in that direction. The fossil magnolia DNA formed a substantial part of the instructions for making an enzyme called ribulose 1,5 biphosphate carboxylase (RuBisCo). Golenberg and his colleagues have managed to compare it with RuBisCo genes from modern magnolias. Because the age of the fossil DNA is known (between 17 and 20 million years old), researchers will be able to judge the efficacy of theoretical tricks used to reconstruct possible "ancestral" RuBisCo gene sequences.

The downside is that there will be few opportunities to perpetrate such a *tour de force*, only possible if the preservation of the fossils is truly exceptional. Growing near a deep lake in what is now Idaho, magnolias shed their leaves on the water. The leaves became waterlogged and sank to the oxygen-poor bottom, where they were rapidly buried. The speed of burial meant that the plant material remained almost intact down to the tiniest detail: complete cells, and even the structures within them, are well preserved. Importantly, the chemistry of the sediment acts to preserve rather than damage the DNA within the cells.

Henry Gee
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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Continued on page 36

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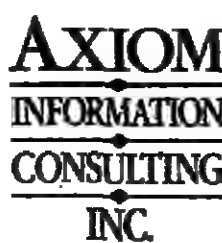
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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Unsealing a diseased fate

Researchers are examining the possibility of vaccinating wildlife against the type of viral infection that killed 18,000 grey and common seals around the coasts of Europe in 1988, including 3,000 along the British coasts.

Two years ago, the first report came of an unknown disease which became a catastrophic epidemic among the sea-mammal communities around the coasts of Northern Europe.

While the North Sea populations survived, conservationists are worried about the almost certain extinction of some species of sea mammals if the virus spreads to the endangered Mediterranean monk seal.

The possibility of creating a vaccine was considered once the cause of the infection was established, but mass immunization of wildlife was dismissed as impractical.

A group led by Dr John Harwood and Dr Ailsa Hall, from the Natural Environment Research Council's Sea Mammals Research Unit, Cambridge, who were in the UK's rescue team, are studying the biological development needed for a vaccine.

The awesome logistics of an animal immunization programme are outlined by another member of the Cambridge team, Sheila Anderson, in a book, *Seals*, published today.

She asks why if dogs can be vaccinated against the lethal canine distemper virus, CDV, seals cannot be protected against the newly discovered phocine distemper virus, PDV,

Pearce Wright reports on the fight to stop another killer epidemic among seals

which turned out to be responsible.

Theoretically, they can be. Animals which have been in captivity are given injections before being released back into the wild. The trouble with immunizing seals is that two shots are needed three to four weeks apart. It is difficult enough to catch seals once, let alone twice. Moreover, seal pups can swim 40 miles in nine days.

The task of inoculating the more than 125,000 common and grey seals around the British coast would be virtually impossible. A single-shot vaccine is possible but it contains live virus material which may present ecological problems and could pose a serious risk of cross-infection.

The disease will break out again in the seal populations if individuals which have not been exposed to the virus encounter infectious animals.

On the Continent, where up to 60 per cent of the populations died, the remaining seals may have gained resistance. In recounting the dangers ahead, Mrs Anderson has also pro-

vided a guide to the 34 species and their locations, providing valuable information for anyone who is interested in seal-watching.

The main breeding grounds for both grey and common seals in Britain are on the Outer Hebrides, Shetland and Orkney Islands, off the coast of Scotland. Even a casual observer should have little difficulty in identifying a seal seen at reasonably close quarters from Guy Trouton's drawings in the book. Yet even experts often mistake the two dominant UK types, the grey and the common seal — a misnomer since it is less common than the grey. But the quickest check is that common seals are snub-nosed and greys have elongated muzzles.

The biological miracle that allows them to bob up for air for less than a minute before diving again for up to seven or eight minutes, intrigues sea mammal researchers. Below the waves their hearts beat at 40 per minute and then rocket to more than 120 a minute once above the surface.

'To inoculate more than 125,000 common and grey seals on the British coast would be virtually impossible'

Strong bonding between mother and pup is vital since the infant grows at a phenomenal rate on a diet of about 2.5 litres a day of fat-rich milk.

Pups put on 2kg (4.5lb) a day, and reach 45kg (100lb) in 16 to 18 days. Mrs Anderson says the enormous energy drain on a mother when suckling her pups is equivalent to the energy from 70 cream buns a day.

But the book's primary aim is to focus on the questions raised by the epidemic threatening the seal communities and which remain unanswered. Where did the virus come from? Was it due to pollution?

Her fears are compounded by calls from fishermen for seals to be killed because they blame them for declining fish stocks in the North Atlantic. Pollution and organochlorines from chemical wastes and agricultural runoff have already caused reproductive failure and ill health.

Although tissue from dead seals analysed so far has not shown high levels of toxic chemicals, Mrs Anderson says it is not yet known what level of contamination could affect the seals' immune systems.

She is more optimistic about the future, saying that the source of the virus seems likely to have been Arctic seals and, with the high degree of immunity now in UK populations, affected communities should begin to recover.

Seals (Whitman Books, £6.95)



Up against the tide: common seals such as this pup suffer from pollution and disease

Fit rats resistant

Energetic rats are more resistant to cancer-causing agents than sedentary ones, preliminary laboratory studies have shown. Professor Robert E. Beyer, a biochemist at the University of Michigan, compared rats who are induced to run seven to nine miles a day to inactive rats.

Both groups were injected with carcinogenic, carbon tetrachloride and ethanol. Professor Beyer found that the active rats had significantly less cell damage in the initial stages of cancer than the others. However, just how exercise protects rats is not yet known.

Ice age drops

Examination of more than 40 ft of core extracted from the North Atlantic between Newfoundland and northern France has provided strong evidence that, during the last ice age and perhaps during all of them, there were drastic shifts of climate at intervals of about 1,000 years. Evidence for such abrupt changes has been found in a core obtained by the Ocean Drilling Program, financed by seven international governments and organizations.

Coal project

An £8 million development programme to demonstrate a clean process for converting coal into gas is being funded in Britain jointly by the Department of Energy, British Gas, National Power, PowerGen, and British Coal. It will use the British Gas/Lurgi (BGL) slagging gasifier at the British Gas Westfield Development Centre in Fife.

Rocket restart

Launches of the European Ariane rocket, grounded since an explosion during a lift-off in February, can start up again this summer, officials announced earlier this week. Frederic d'Allest, president of Arianeespace, the European Space Agency's commercial arm, said a date might be set by early May. Announcing the findings of an investigative panel, he said that the failed launch was due to a loss of thrust in one of the rocket's first-stage Viking-V motors. This was caused by the almost total obstruction of the circuit which feeds water to the motor.

Patent win

In an important judgment for Genentech Inc. the San Francisco-based genetic engineering firm, an American court ruled last Friday that the company's patents were valid for its genetically-engineered "clot buster", or tissue plasminogen activator (TPA). TPA belongs to a class of drugs called thrombolytics which are used to break up blood clots in heart attack victims and for which an

BRIEFING

enormous battle has developed in the drug industry. The court ruled that the patents had been infringed by products under development by Burroughs Wellcome and Genentech Inc. Burroughs Wellcome said it was reviewing the decision to determine its future course of action.

Sensor study

Britain has a strong academic research base in advanced sensor technology which is ripe for commercial exploitation, according to a Department of Trade and Industry study. The scientific instrument industry is urged to take early advantage of the commercial opportunities to gain a significant share of such an important growth market. Advanced sensor technology, employing fibre optics and other techniques, offers practical benefits to many sectors of industry such as aerospace, automotive, food processing, chemicals, and water supply. The review identified 29 groups working with solid state sensors and 27 working with fibre optic or integrated optic sensors.

Up and away

A Pegasus rocket was successfully launched into orbit last week from the wing of a B-52 bomber, giving the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) and the private American space industry a new method of boosting small payloads into space. It was the first time a space-bound rocket had been launched from an aircraft. It was proof of the viability of a commercial venture to develop a relatively inexpensive way of sending a spacecraft into orbit. The Pegasus rocket was dropped from the wing of the Nasa-owned B-52 at 43,000ft (13,106m) over California. Five seconds later, the rocket's engine ignited, and the 50ft (15m) rocket soared into space. Its third stage later released a small Navy communications satellite that will circle the globe in a polar orbit 320 nautical miles up. The rocket is a joint venture of Orbital Sciences Corp, of Fairfax, Virginia, and Hercules Aerospace Co, of Wilmington, Delaware. It can carry satellites weighing up to 900lb (408kg) into orbit.

Penguin killer

A lethal agent which has wiped out 60 per cent of the world's yellow-eyed penguins is continuing to elude scientists. The extremely rare birds died off the Otago Peninsula, New Zealand, during a two-week period earlier this year. Suspicion centred on a toxin which may have entered the birds' food chain. John Darby, head of science at Otago Museum, says that extensive tests in Australia had failed to trace any toxins in the penguin corpses recovered. He said it was frustrating, but had highlighted how little was known about penguins and what happened to them at sea.



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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Spy-proof glass a window to future

Scientists are experimenting with a new spy-proof glass which could provide the ultimate weapon for high-security buildings against electronic eavesdroppers. The glass could be used to replace windows in government buildings, embassies and high-security financial and commercial houses. Until now, conventional windows have proved to be the glaring hole in the defence against electronic "bugging" or interference from outside.

The idea that has attracted the attention of the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign Office and the City is aimed at stopping the accidental transmission of electronic signals from computer screens that may be read by outsiders. It will also protect the memory banks of computer systems from being altered or wiped clean, deliberately or by default, by radio signals. The experiment is a joint venture between Government and industrial researchers. They have modified an office at the Building Research Establishment, near Watford, to test the device.

Pearce Wright says a new glass may be the perfect weapon against electronic eavesdroppers

The research was prompted by studies three years ago showing how a van equipped with carefully tuned electronic eavesdropping equipment could park outside a building and read data on the computer screens inside. Technically, the phenomenon should have caused little surprise since the electronic spy is a specialized version of the television detector van which looks for signals generated from the sets of television viewers who have not paid a licence fee.

The simple answer to the threat is to make sure that the room forms a Faraday cage which, in effect,

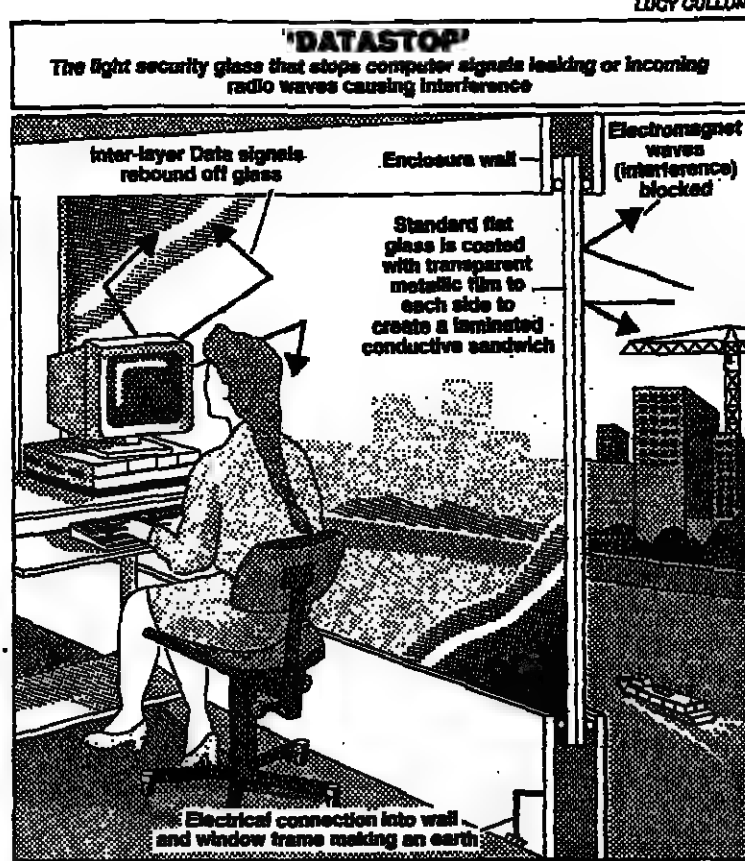
means it would be a metal box or wire cage preventing interference from electrical disturbances.

The idea would involve an enlarged version of the method that electronic engineers adopt as a routine to protect sensitive electronic circuits, surrounding them with an earthed wire screen.

Since the conversion of offices into a series of claustrophobic metal cubicles was hardly an attractive proposition, a more practical solution was needed, according to David Goodall, of British glass manufacturers, Pilkington. He says that a determined eavesdropper can pick up computer signals leaking along radiator ducts, electrical cabling and other plumbing routes; but they could all be screened.

The glaring hole in all defences was the window. Hence the project began in Pilkington's research department with the search for an electronically leak-proof glass that retained the normal visual and architectural characteristics.

The answer, called data defence glass or Datastop, begins life as two panes of flat glass from the firm's



bulk production line. Each side of each pane is coated with a layer of one of three different coatings of a transparent, electrically conducting metallic film.

The two panes of coated glass are stuck together as a laminated sandwich and electrical connections are

made between the layers and the walls of the buildings, creating a Faraday cage with no holes.

The composition of the metallic film and how it can be applied to give a tinted look are being closely guarded as commercial secrets by Pilkington.

JOBSCENE

Users call for better safety

Unions are now coming to grips with the problems of computer use

The giant computer manufacturer IBM recently cut its computer terminals to a Swedish standard, and will do the same for personal computers soon because of customer demand. But Paul Sneyd, IBM's VDU and ergonomics project officer, says the company will not adapt existing computers, because it believes they are safe.

The debate over health hazards in the information technology industry rages on. Computer users complain of eye fatigue induced by looking at visual display units (VDUs) for long stretches, and pain in the wrists and hands from using keyboards. Some believe that the radiation emitted by computers can cause birth defects.

The most commonly documented complaints centre around tenosynovitis, otherwise known as Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI). This is listed as an industrial disease by the Department of Employment's Health and Safety Executive (HSE), mainly applied to manual and production line workers who do repetitive tasks with their hands.

After a study of 580 people with the disease, the HSE reported that secretaries, operators and checkout staff run the highest risk of developing RSI. The RSI Association (0895 38663), a support group, describes the problem as an epidemic because of the introduction of new technology.

The Manufacturing, Science and Finance (MSF) Union says RSI is an increasing problem for office workers, particularly VDU operators, computer programmers, word processor operators and data entry staff.

It is backing a large number of cases for industrial injury because of computer use, with

12 registered in the last year alone. This area is still largely untested in law.

The union has recently backed and won what it describes as a "landmark case", when the Department of Social Security (DSS) conceded that a keyboard operator was due backdated disability benefit for tenosynovitis. It should open the way for other computer users to claim invalidity benefits from the DSS.

Others say that the office environment is at fault. The City Centre, an advice and information co-operative for London workers, claims a survey showed that 94 per cent of VDU workers are experiencing four or more symptoms of ill health, including eye strain, headaches, tiredness, back and neck pains and tension.

The City Centre is co-ordinating a VDU workers' rights campaign, and argues that computer rooms are often noisy, poorly lit and ill-designed, with little attention being paid to workers' needs.

Dr Joe Kerns, an independent occupational physician, says that eye strain and RSI are caused by poor design of computers and offices.

The problem is not radiation, but muscular strain, and it is still amazing to see how poorly computers are designed. We've gone back to levels of ignorance about the ergonomics or technology of 100 years ago.

"Users should not sit in front of screens for too long, and work should be structured so they have to get up and move around," Dr Kerns says.

A House of Lords select committee last year advised the rejection of a directive from the European Community (EC) that there should be legislation imposing minimum health and safety standards for VDU users.

Dr William Hunter, a senior EC medical adviser, says that although the evidence that VDUs cause serious health hazards is weak, the EC feels the directive was necessary because of the "vast volume" of public concern.

Leslie Tilley

Technical problems have plagued the \$1.5 billion Hubble space telescope project since its approval in 1977. The problems have been a continuing source of anxiety for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) and for American and European astronomers who have so much riding on the enterprise, due for launch on Tuesday but now delayed indefinitely.

More importantly, last-minute hitches with the launch are scarcely the psychological fill needed for a crew expected to carry out the most demanding engineering feat in the history of space exploration.

Discovery was the only member of the space shuttle fleet powerful enough to carry the 43ft observatory into space and there was barely room for a shoebox once the telescope was packed into the payload bay. The four-man, one-woman crew has undergone months of training for the elaborate sequence of operations needed to drop off and assemble the huge observatory in space.

Crew to make a gentle drop

The composition of the crew offers a clue to the technical nature of the venture. The commander of the mission is Colonel Loren Shriver, a 46-year-old US Air Force pilot making his second shuttle flight. The other astronauts are Col. Charles Bolden, 44, of the Marine Corps; Captain Bruce McCandless II, 53, a US Navy officer; Dr Steven Hawley, 39, an astronomer; and Dr Kathryn Sullivan, 39, a geologist.

Once in space, the crew will use Discovery's mechanical arm to gently prize the telescope from its cradle in the payload bay. The telescope's instruments and control systems will be checked before detailed deployment manoeuvres begin.

At each step, scores of specialists on the ground will monitor electronic signals and approve each step in the delicate operation.

The astronauts will use a

battery-driven, hand-held tool similar to a normal DIY power drill, but called a "torque limiter", to ensure that the correct force is applied in tightening the connectors. The task of unfurling the huge wings carrying the solar panels, which are rolled in

tubes and strapped like a straight-jacket to the side of the telescope for the flight, presents the biggest challenge.

After its deployment, energy will begin to flow from the solar cells to the Hubble observatory's internal power systems, starting a two-way

flow of data between the instruments and the crew and ground controllers.

Only then can the shuttle depart. Another three or four days of testing will be needed to check that the telescope can move and point with the necessary precision.

Research will not begin for at least two months to allow a meticulous verification procedure to be conducted from the ground.

The telescope promises breakthroughs in the study of how galaxies were formed and how far they are from Earth and the characteristics of white dwarf stars, supernovae, black holes, pulsars, gravitational lenses and quasars.

One of the most remarkable aspects of this breathtaking project is the people who dreamed of a space telescope. In 1946, 11 years before the first Sputnik space launch, Dr Lyman Spitzer, now professor of astrophysics at Princeton



Team: Bolden, Hawley, Shriver, McCandless, Sullivan

Continued from page 34

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Steve Acteson sets the scene for the world snooker championship which begins tomorrow

Talented cast ready for the Crucible show

TELEVISION sport's favourite cast of characters is ready: Steve Davis so cool, Stephen Hendry so boyish, Cliff Thorburn so taciturn, Alex Higgins so unpredictable, Jimmy White so nervy and fast, John Parrott so determined... all so different, all with foibles that appeal to the audience and appeal the rest of them, all waiting in the wings at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, for the start tomorrow of snooker's annual 17-day spectacular, the Embassy world championship.

A total of £620,000 is at stake (including the qualifying competition) and the eventual winner, on April 29, will collect £120,000. He will have won a total of 70 frames, he will have become (or reinstated himself as) a national hero and he will have kept millions of TV viewers, right across the social spectrum and with no interest in any other sporting activity for the rest of the year, transfixed for hours on end.

Each of the 16 first-round matches is over the best of 19 frames and the competition builds to a two-day, four-session, best-of-35-frames final.

A year ago, Davis tore into Parrott so ferociously to win 18-3 for his third successive

world championship and his sixth in all (thus equalling Ray Reardon's modern championship record) — that it was all over with the entire final evening session to spare.

The public had bought their seats and had to be entertained; the show had to go on. To send Parrott back out against Davis in an exhibition match — with an official of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association popping up occasionally, dressed in a gorilla suit, to spray them with a soda siphon — smacked of crassness. It could have shattered Parrott's dignity.

But Parrott coped manfully; and later, much to his amazement, he left the Crucible stage door with Karen, then his fiancée and now his wife, to an ecstatic reception from hundreds of supporters.

That said a great deal about Parrott and his character. This season, he is rated No. 2 in the world (perhaps a place or two more than he is worth) and retained the European Open. He will again be a force at the Crucible. But practically all of the signs point towards a final between the two best players in the world, Davis and Hendry.

The bookmakers have made Davis favourite for the tenth successive year, eschewing in the process the former joint

favourite, Hendry, the 21-year-old from Scotland who has dominated the season, winning five titles. He is expected by many to be too sharp for all those he is due to meet on his way to the final, until when he cannot meet Davis.

The champion, who had appeared somewhat below his best between winning his second title of the season last October and his third, the Benson and Hedges Irish Masters on April 1, begins his defence tomorrow against Eddie Charlton, the 60-year-old from Australia, the match coming to its conclusion in the evening.

Beyond Davis and Hendry, it is the rich variety of the cast that makes the world championship such compulsive viewing, not only to the TV millions but also to the hundreds who pack the Crucible, the perfect snooker auditorium, every session, three times a day.

First on today are Higgins and Steve James, whose quality was successfully examined as he won the Mercantile Credit Classic in January, beating Davis in the semi-finals.

Higgins's excesses are legendary and mostly to be despised but it is he, more than anyone, who can lay claim to making snooker the TV spectator sport of the 1980s and almost certainly the 1990s as well.

So, who is going to be holding the winner's cheque on April 29? My vote goes to Davis, but only by the slightest of margins from Hendry. An outsider? Try Gary Wilkinson or Steve James, if he can beat Higgins in the first round, and Davis, should they meet in the second round.



On target: A young, long-haired Steve Davis, pictured before he achieved his first world title, is now chasing his seventh world championship

Backing for White

JIMMY White has been heavily backed to win the Embassy World Championship, including a single bet of £2,000 from one client in Hampshire with Coral, who have moved him to 7-1 third favourite behind Steve Davis, the 7-4 favourite, and Stephen Hendry, whose odds are 5-2. The odds on a Davis-Hendry final are 2-1.

LATEST ODDS: 7-4 S Davis, 5-2 S Hendry, 7-1 J White, 5-1 J Parrott, 15-1 S James, 25-1 S Wilkinson, 28-1 D Mountjoy, 33-1 T Griffiths, M Hallett, D Reynolds, C Thorburn, 40-1 A Higgins, A Robb, W Thomas, 50-1 D Morgan, J Johnson, D Taylor, 66-1 N Foulds, A Knowles, 8-1 W Jones, A Mee, 100-1 M Jarrett, D Fowler, S Goss, S Newbury, 150-1 A Drago, P Francisco, R Gilbert, J Vargo, 200-1 A Chappell, 800-1 E Charlton, C Wilson.

DRAW FOR THE EMBASSY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP				
FIRST ROUND	SECOND ROUND	QUARTER-FINALS	SEMI-FINALS	FINAL
S Davis v E Charlton (Aus)				
S James v A Higgins (N Ireland)				
W Thomas v A Drago (Wales)				
D Taylor (N Ireland) v N Foulds				
T Griffiths (Wales) v M Hallett				
A Knowles v A Chappell (Wales)				
J Vargo v G Wilkinson				
J White v D Fowler				
S Hendry (Scotland) v A Robb (Canada)				
A Mee v W Jones (Wales)				
J Johnson v D Morgan (Wales)				
M Hallett v S Newbury (Wales)				
C Thorburn (Canada) v C Wilson				
D Mountjoy (Wales) v B Goss (Canada)				
R Reynolds v P Francisco (SA)				
J Parrott v M Bennett (Wales)				

First round matches are best of 19 frames; second round and quarter-finals are best of 25 frames; semi-finals are best of 31 frames; final is best of 35 frames.

Prize money: Champion, £120,000; runner-up, £72,000; losing semi-finalists, £36,000; losing quarter-finalists, £18,000; second-round losers, £9,000; first-round losers, £4,500; high-break prize, £12,000. Total, including qualifying competition, £620,000. Special maximum break prize, £100,000.

● The Crucible Theatre, Sheffield was first used as a world championship venue in 1977. The previous year the final had been split between Middlesbrough Town Hall and the Wythenshawe Forum in Manchester, Ray Reardon beating Alex Higgins 27-18.

● The Crucible has been the stage for many snooker records. In 1983, Cliff Thorburn beat Terry Griffiths 13-12 in the second round at 3.51 am, the latest recorded finish to a tournament match. In 1985, the latest recorded finish to a tournament match, the biggest known audience to watch a sporting spectacle on television. It was also the biggest audience that BBC2

has ever commanded and it was the largest British television audience to watch a programme after midnight. ● When the world champion is crowned on April 29 he will win £120,000, a far cry from the first world championship in 1927 when the winner, Joe Davis, pocketed a mere £8 10s (£8.50).

The world championship will be held at the Crucible until at least 1996 because of a £6.5 million sponsorship deal with Imperial Tobacco who have put the Embassy brand name to the tournament since 1976.

● Cliff Thorburn, of Canada, is the only non-UK resident to win the world title, in 1980, and in 1983 he also became the only player to score a maximum 147 break in the championship.

● Steve Davis and Ray Reardon share the modern-day record of winning the world title six times. Davis's triumphs

came on 1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1988 and 1989; Reardon was world champion in 1970, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1978 and 1979.

Davis is, however, the only player to have won the title on successive years at the Crucible.

● The Crucible role of honour: 1977: John Spencer, 1978: Ray Reardon, 1979: Terry Griffiths, 1980: Cliff Thorburn, 1981: Steve Davis, 1982: Alex Higgins, 1983: Davis, 1984: Davis, 1985: Dennis Taylor, 1986: Joe Johnson, 1987: Davis, 1988: Davis, 1989: Davis.

● Brady Golan, of Canada, is the only first-season professional to reach the final phase. His compatriot, Alain Robb, will also be making his Crucible debut and other first-timers are Nigel Gilbert, of England, and Tony Chappell, of Wales.

Hendry certain his moment has come to gain the title

STEPHEN Hendry not only believes he can win the Embassy world championship but says: "I will win it."

The 21-year-old from Scotland has captured five titles this season but believes that his victory over Steve Davis in the Stormont United Kingdom final in Preston last December proved to him once and for all that he is ready to take over from Davis as both world champion and world No. 1.

The world and UK events are the most coveted titles because they are played over longer-distance matches and are, therefore, considered the true test of an aspiring champion.

Davis, who has won them both six times, has never concealed his dislike of the usual best-of-nine-frame affairs, but had proved almost unbeatable in the longer matches before Hendry defeated him in the 1988 UK semi-finals and then again in the 1989 UK final.

That second successive de-

feat had two important effects. It sparked the longest losing run in Davis's career and gave Hendry the final proof that he was good enough to scale his ultimate career peaks.

Hendry, who begins his campaign next Tuesday against Alain Robb, the richly talented French-Canadian, said: "Beating Davis in the UK final proved that I'm not frightened of anyone and it proved to me that I can last the distance."

"If I hadn't won it a lot of people who were doubting me would have thought I can't win the world championship either. But now I can see absolutely no reason at all why I shouldn't."

"If I were in Davis's position, having dominated the game for 10 years and especially over the longer matches, then to lose twice to me over a distance, I would seriously think of that as a challenge to my supremacy."

"Davis hadn't won a tournament since October until the Benson and Hedges Irish

Masters earlier this month — and that cannot count for nothing — then he will certainly raise his game at the Crucible."

"These days he seems to need three chances to win a frame instead of one and I certainly hope to be playing to a higher standard than that."

It is endearing to learn that even sportsmen as eminently successful as Hendry still dream of glory. "It must be an amazing feeling to lift that world championship trophy and, on the practice table, when I'm making a big break or clearance, I imagine I'm clearing up to win the final frame of the world final," he said.

"I thought about that when I was making a 60 break to win the UK final. If I never won the world championship I wouldn't feel a failure, but I don't think that will happen. I think I will win it — this year."

Hendry once said he would retire at 25. But now he says: "I'll keep on playing as long as I'm enjoying it."

Davis in no mood to give up crown

STEVE Davis will set out to prove tomorrow at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, that he is not yet ready to abdicate as both Embassy world champion and world No. 1.

Davis will establish a modern-day record of seven world titles if, on April 29, he is again crowned as champion and the 32-year-old millionaire is once more the bookmakers' favourite.

Victory in the Benson and Hedges Irish Masters on April 1, however, ended the longest losing streak of his career, stretching back to October. Problems with his technique precipitated a crisis of confidence and, to make matters psychologically worse, his arch rival, Stephen Hendry, was reigning supreme while he was in decline.

Hendry, the 21-year-old Scot, has won five titles this season and although his form has slumped in recent weeks, he is still considered by many to be a serious threat to Davis's dominance.

The world champion looks at it differently, however, saying: "Hendry is only a threat to me if we both get to the final. The biggest threat to me at the moment is Eddie Charlton, and until I have won our first-round match, that threat remains."

"Thirty two players will start level at the Crucible and if I was thinking that it was only between Hendry and me it would be incredible folly. I am going back to square one, really. I am going to the world championship not really knowing what is going to happen, but there is little difference between this season and last."

"Also started that one like a 125 Inter-City express and ended up looking more like Ivor the Engine — until I went to the Crucible that is. What has happened to me needs to be put into perspective. I am

not playing up to my form of, say, 1982 or '83, but the overall standard was lower then and I could nick wins playing badly."

"If the flywheel had totally fallen off it would have been a bitter pill to swallow but the reality is that the standard is better now and I am having to accept that. For me to win means I have to play better than average, whereas before I could get away with average. If I had a bad spell now I am much more likely to be punished than I used to be."

"I have never been conscious of winning the world championship. I have never been anything but shaking like a leaf before the first round."

"It is a strange tournament because there are such long matches to get your teeth into and possibly there is a different motivation required, because the world championship is for marathon men, not 1,500-metre runners," he said.

Looking ahead, Davis sees the game's honours being spread about during the 1990s. "You will still have some players winning more than others but you may never again have the situation where one player dominates, as Ray Reardon did in the '70s and I did in the '80s."

"I still consider that I will play a major part in the 1990s. I am not lacking in the drive to do well nor in self belief. Snooker is my natural vocation. I thrive on the constant re-assessing and re-defining, the getting ready for a tournament and trying your guts out to win it."

"I think I have the technology, the ingredients, needed to be up there for a long, long time. Lack of winning didn't mean that had all gone. It just meant that I hadn't won for a while — it will take a lot more than that to send me into oblivion."

Thorburn's make-or-break

THE Embassy World Championship will be very much a time of make-or-break for Cliff Thorburn. The Crucible Theatre abounds with memories for the 42-year-old from Canada. It was there in 1980 that he became the first — and so far only — non-Briton to win the title.

In 1983, he had the crowd on their feet once more when he compiled the first — and again so far the only — maximum 147 break in the championship's history. He reached the final that year, too, but was soundly beaten 18-6 by Steve Davis.

Only two years ago Thorburn made the semi-finals, before losing to Davis once more, but that year he

was making the wrong kind of headlines. He came to Sheffield with the snooker world shocked that he had been positively drug tested for cocaine at the British Open a few weeks earlier, an offence for which he was heavily fined and banned for two ranking events at the beginning of last season.

That ban helped precipitate a decline and, should he lose his place in the top 16, it will certainly cost him dearly, for he will lose his place in the Regal Scottish Masters, the Benson and Hedges Masters and the Benson and Hedges Irish Masters.

On Sunday night, Thorburn will attempt to rekindle the

fires of ambition in the first session of his best of 19 frames first-round match with Cliff Wilson, of Wales.

"I don't know how many ranking points I need, hell, I am just going out to play and let's see what happens," Thorburn said.

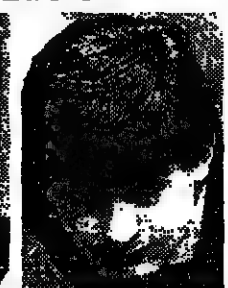
"I just wish I could get it right. I have a cue-alignment problem. I thought it was my eyes but when I went to see the optician he told me my eyes were second to none; it was the worst good news I have ever had."

"I feel very good within myself, away from the table. The family is great and we are all having a great time — except for daddy's snooker."

BIOGRAPHIES OF EIGHT LEADING PLAYERS AND FOUR WHO COULD CAUSE AN UPSET AT THE CRUCIBLE THEATRE



STEVE DAVIS (Eng)
Age 32. World ranking 1. First round opponent, Eddie Charlton. Season's prize-money, £286,001. 1989, beat Parrott 18-3 in final. For almost anyone else the winning of three important titles would suggest a fine season. For Davis, however, the gap between the second win, in October, and the third, on April 1, left many observers doubting his ability to win this year's world title and record a modern-day record of seven. He has had problems with technique and, therefore, with his confidence, but the recent victory over him and the bookmakers' confidence to make him favourite once more.



JOHN PARROTT (Eng)
Age 25. World ranking 2. First round opponent, Mark Bennett. Season's prize-money, £192,966. 1989, lost to Davis in final. Parrott won the European Open title last season, his first big title, and reached the final of the world championship where he was overwhelmed by Davis. This lifted Parrott, judging by his earlier performance this season, to a slightly false position as world No. 2. He proved a great deal to himself, however, in retaining the European Open in Lyon last month and is the toughest quarter of the draw.



STEPHEN HENDRY (Sco)
Age 21. World ranking 3. First round opponent, Alain Robb. Season's prize-money, £411,027. 1989, beaten 18-6 by Davis in semi-finals. The strongest challenger to Davis's pre-eminence since the emergence of Jimmy White in the early 1980s, Hendry has had a magnificent season, winning five titles, including the second most important in the calendar — the Stormont United Kingdom final, where he beat Davis in the final. The young Scot has not won, however, since the Benson and Hedges Masters at Wembley in February, but did reach the European Open final in Lyon, where he lost 10-5 to Parrott.



JIMMY WHITE (Eng)
Age 27. World ranking 4. First round opponent, Danny Foweraker. Season's prize-money, £198,875. 1989, beaten 13-7 by Parrott in the last eight. Unkindly labelled "the best player never to have won the world championship," White is still young enough and talented enough to do so in style, as he proved in winning the Everest World Matchplay title this season. He remains totally unpredictable, however, and for one with his superb talents he should have won many more than the 13 titles that he has captured since turning professional in 1980. White has lost in three world semi-finals, but reached the final in 1984, only to lose 18-16 to Davis.



TERRY GRIFFITHS (Wales)
Age 42. World ranking 5. First round opponent, Nigel Gilbert. Season's prize-money, £29,315. 1989, beaten 13-5 by Hendry in quarter-finals. If practice truly made perfect then Griffiths, who practises more than most players, should surely have won the world title more than once, a feat he achieved at his first attempt in 1978. Nine years went by before he would surely have won the world title more than once, a feat he achieved at his first attempt in 1978. Nine years went by before he would surely have won the world title more than once, a feat he achieved at his first attempt in 1978.



MIKE HALLETT (Eng)
Age 30. World ranking 6. First round opponent, Steve Newbury. Season's prize-money, £25,156. 1989, beaten 13-3 by Davis in quarter-finals. If Hallett believed he had found the key to success when he won his first ranking title, the Hong Kong Open last August, then he was surely to be disappointed. Hallett, who has never gone beyond the quarter-finals in eight attempts at the Crucible, followed his single success by winning only seven matches in the subsequent 11 singles tournaments this season. That was two years ago but Davis proved far too strong for the Welshman, winning 18-11.



CLIFF THORBURN (Can)
Age 41. World ranking 7. First round opponent, Cliff Wilson. Season's prize-money, £25,156. 1989, beaten 13-10 by Parrott in round one. Nobody with even a passing interest in snooker could forget Thorburn, who won the crown in 1980 and was runner-up to Davis three years later. The former world No. 2 has plummeted to 24th in the standings, provisionally for next season and is contemplating returning home to Canada to live, although he will not retire from the snooker circuit. He has won only four matches in his 11 singles events this season.



DENNIS TAYLOR (N Ire)
Age 41. World ranking 8. First round opponent, Neal Foulds. Season's prize-money, £22,328. 1989, lost 10-9 in round one to Wayne Jones. Victory in the Mercantile Credit Classic Final in January, having already accounted for Davis in the semi-finals, but a combination of illness, marital problems and a lack of confidence and form saw him sliding from third in the world rankings last season to twentieth this season. He has completely recovered his poise and largely regained the form which took him to the world semi-finals in 1987.



STEVE JAMES (Eng)
Age 28. World ranking 16. First round opponent, Dennis Taylor. Season's prize-money, £125,037. 1989, beaten 10-9 by Parrott in round one. Victory in the Mercantile Credit Classic Final in January, having already accounted for Davis in the semi-finals, but a combination of illness, marital problems and a lack of confidence and form saw him sliding from third in the world rankings last season to twentieth this season. He has completely recovered his poise and largely regained the form which took him to the world semi-finals in 1987.



NEAL FOULDS (Eng)
Age 26. World ranking 20. First round opponent, John Vargo. Season's prize-money, £22,328. 1989, lost 10-9 to Hendry in round one. Foulds is still a realistic bet for a bit of a run. It is only 2½ years since he beat Davis to win his last tournament, but a combination of illness, marital problems and a lack of confidence and form saw him sliding from third in the world rankings last season to twentieth this season. He has completely recovered his poise and largely regained the form which took him to the world semi-finals in 1987.



GARY WILKINSON (Eng)
Age 24. World ranking 23. First round opponent, John Vargo. Season's prize-money, £22,328. 1989, lost 10-9 to Vargo in round one. A professional since only 1987, Wilkinson was narrowly beaten by Hendry on his Crucible debut last year and has the qualifying competition improved by leaps and bounds this season. He reached the semi-finals of the first two ranking events, the Hong Kong Open and Bangkok, and, but for miscalculating the first fought back to 9-9 score on the final pink and, even when Chappell of the Staines frame-thrower had an opening in his United Kingdom break of 46 in the semi-final against Davis, he would surely have reached the final — and 42 for a remarkable 11 in the quarter-finals of that event but his shown lack of form told.



DARREN MORGAN (Wales)
Age 23. World ranking 25. First round opponent, Joe Johnson. Season's prize-money, £22,328. 1989, lost 10-9 to Vargo in round one. A professional since only 1987, Morgan, the 1987 world champion, was narrowly beaten by Hendry on his Crucible debut last year and has the qualifying competition improved by leaps and bounds this season. He reached the semi-finals of the first two ranking events, the Hong Kong Open and Bangkok, and, but for miscalculating the first fought back to 9-9 score on the final pink and, even when Chappell of the Staines frame-thrower had an opening in his United Kingdom break of 46 in the semi-final against Davis, he would surely have reached the final — and 42 for a remarkable 11 in the quarter-finals of that event but his shown lack of form told.

Steinlager's skipper proves that a series of S-bends is the shortest distance between two ports as he waits for the fleet to sail in

A light touch by the quiet man of the sea



Technical expert: Blake, ocean racing's foremost sailor

Fort Lauderdale, Florida
NEVER having sailed much more than 120 miles at a single stretch, I am not eligible to analyse results after five legs of the 33,000-mile Whitbread Round the World Race. What I do know, first hand, is that a reaching (wind broadside or behind) mizzen staysail can enchantingly transform a boat's performance, like a square-rig sail. Peter Blake, ocean racing's foremost sailor, is proving this with a vengeance.

The day-and-a-half overall lead which the New Zealander now has with Steinlager 2 after five legs is due primarily to two factors: the two-mast ketch rig, which critically favours three of the leading yachts including Fisher & Paykel and The Card, and his experience of multi-hull technique which he has adapted to such effect on a mono-hull.

Blake, who at 41 is approaching double figures for circumnavigations with 400,000 miles logged during 20 years, is midway through a six-year, projected three-boat sponsorship with his New Zealand brewery group, Lion Nathan. Steinlager 1, a trimaran in which, hair-raisingly, he won the 7,500-mile Round Australia Race two years ago, not only gave him the most exciting sailing he has ever known. It taught him some radical new approaches to the big "maxi" mono-hulls.

On this race, Blake has almost abandoned the conventional use of downwind spinnakers, aesthetically beautiful but cumbersome.



David Miller

Instead, sailing slightly off the line of the wind in a series of S-bends, and using a large headsail and massive 3,000 square-foot staysail - rigged amidship between mizzen and main mast - Steinlager 2 is achieving a valuable two to three knots more than with a spinnaker.

"Without this, we possibly wouldn't be winning," Blake says, sitting relaxed in a cafe on the dockside as the rest of the leaders of the fleet of 23 arrive at intervals of several hours. "The design computers said it wouldn't work, because they had no experience of ketch rigs. And the trimaran taught me the benefit of keeping the boat light - changed the traditional way of sailing a mono-hull. In a multi-hull, the distribution of every kilo on board counts. Steinlager 2 is the most uncluttered of all the big boats, in layout and crew. Everything is in the right place. There are still lots of things in this race that people haven't thought about."

Blake is a thinking man. Although he is a national hero in a country obsessed with sailing, and is widely regarded as a fine leader, there is about him none of that expedient fanaticism or subdued frenzy that exists in such men as his America's Cup compatriot, Chris Dickson, or

in Chay Blyth. Blake is in the gentlemanly Alec Rose mould, with the MBE for his services to the sport, and the romantic feel for the sea which he shares with his mentor, Robin Knox-Johnston; winner of the *Sunday Times* first single-handed round the world race in 1968.

Ashore, for the first time in weeks after sailing 5,475 miles up the coast of South America, Blake is worried about being short with his two young children and their comparatively casual land life following his existence of no more than two hours sleep at a time and, even then, always on duty.

Sailing almost since he could walk, Blake likes to travel from A to B, as opposed to sailing round the buoys, which is why the America's Cup never beckoned. He has done One Ton and Admirals' Cup events, but, "I didn't like the pit-picking and backstabbing that is part of the America's Cup at times," he says.

His strategies are long-term; not like one or two boats in the present race, calculating tactics by the hour rather than by the week, which led Rothman's, working by computer on the first leg with the chart folded, to find suddenly when they turned over that the Cape Verde Islands were obstructing their course to Punta del Este in Uruguay.

Yet Blake's attention to detail, the legacy of four previous Whitbread, is as scrupulous as an America's Cup skipper's regularly servicing the winches at sea, inspecting the

sail seams, plus detailed planning of crew clothing and food stores. During night watches, winches are attended every minute, with no static cleaning (fixing) of sail sheets. He dearly would like to win at the fifth attempt - after finishing second in the last two races, in 1981-82 in Ceramco and 1983-86 in Lion - but will not be heart-broken if he fails.

"These have been a fascinating few years, with room for some lateral thinking," he says, with the mood of the true sportsman, for whom taking part is as important as winning. He has, you sense, the measure of his life, which, when not aloft, he lives at Emsworth in Hampshire. There is a steady thoroughness, typified by the feat, in 1981, of sailing Ceramco 3,700 miles from Ascension Island to Cape Town under jury (makeshift) rig after being dismasted, rather than retiring under engine to the nearest port.

With what seems to be a bizarre misjudgement, some other skippers, such as Lawrie Smith, have previously described Blake as not being a winner, but he shrugs off the criticism. "Perhaps their view may change," he says, without rancour. "I don't think it's worth saying things that antagonize anyone."

The romanticism in him years to build a radical, multi-hull Steinlager 3 that could emulate Verne's circumnavigation in 80 days. "Maybe 80 is not practical," he says on reflection. "But 90? That

would be something." In his mind's eye, he is already celebrating with champagne at the Jules Verne cafe in Paris, his young family around him: the last adventurer.

Yet he recognises that the America's Cup judgement in New York later this month may precipitate a counter attraction for public interest and sponsorship in two years' time; that his dream might have to be shelved for more pragmatic involvement in a home-waters America's Cup challenge as administrative organizer. "I'm not really qualified to skipper, but setting it up, that's a challenge," he says.

For the moment, Blake is concentrating on the next and final leg of the Whitbread, aware that the only thing likely to prevent victory is breakage or a collision. Stage-racing is, in one sense, unfair: the first to arrive on one section has the most time to prepare for the next, and now he is busy making sure everything will be shipshape for the next departure.

"With 36 hours in hand, we can afford to be relaxed [on the final leg]," Blake says. "We won't break the boat up by driving it too hard. We don't have to stress the boat or the crew. It's a nice feeling. If we get 10 miles behind, we don't have to panic. But I won't say we have won till we cross the line."

Panic is the last thing you would expect of this man, who measures time not by the sound of hurrying feet, but by the subtle shift of the wind.

GOLF

Now Master Faldo plans a takeover of Norman's title

From Mitchell Platkin, Golf Correspondent, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

GREG Norman, still for the moment the world's No. 1, had high praise for Nick Faldo on the eve of the Heritage Classic that could lead to them switching rankings. Norman, who missed the halfway cut at the Augusta Masters, scene of Faldo's historic triumph, had interrupted a turkey shoot to watch the last five holes.

"Nick got aggressive, which he had to, and he helped because of what a fabulous putter he is," Norman said.

That said, I have seen a monumental change in his swing. I admire the course he took in remodelling the swing with David Leadbetter. He did not have confidence in his old swing.

"He would be the first to admit that. Now he has all the confidence in the world and, very importantly, the stock shot is back under pressure."

Norman was favourite to win the Masters and will want some sort of revenge here. If Faldo, who won the Heritage tournament in 1984, regains the title, he will move to No. 1 in the Sony world rankings as long as Norman is not runner-up. This will also be the case if he finishes second and Norman is out of the top seven.

Faldo's second successive triumph in the Masters has won him the respect of Scott Hoch, who a year ago rather disparagingly called him "the luckiest golfer in the world".

Hoch, beaten by Faldo in a play-off at Augusta a year ago, said yesterday: "I have not been a fan. I am now. I was impressed by how he won against Ray Floyd last Sunday. He has gone up in my estimation. It cannot be taken away from Nick that he showed a lot of character. It can be a fluke to do it once, you don't get lucky twice."

Hoch, however, disclosed that 12 months ago, when he arrived here still paired by the missed two-foot putt that led to his Masters defeat, that his temperament had been examined in Hoch's words, Faldo "put his spot in his mouth".

Hoch said: "I was standing in the clubhouse and Nick came over to see me. He asked me how I was doing and I said I was doing fine, all things being equal, except that I was finding it difficult to sleep. Nick said he knew exactly what I meant because he, too, had not slept because of all the television and press interviews he had given."

"You can imagine how I felt. I had to bite my lip and turn away from him. I know that Nick was trying to be friendly and that it simply came out wrong. Craig Stadler, who was on the tee with me, pointed out that he did exactly the same with Dan Pohl after a Masters play-off in 1982."

Faldo recalled that mo-

ment. "I wanted to say something to Scott because, as I did for Raymond last Sunday, I felt for him," Faldo said. "The problem is that it is always difficult to find the right words. I know now from experience that if the boot was on the other foot I would prefer it if somebody did not speak to me for six months or so. I know that on Sunday it would have been hard for me to 'put the green jacket' on Raymond after all that happened."

Hoch watched Faldo on the television in the locker room. "The trouble with Nick is that you need to get past his persona," Hoch said. "I admire him as a player even if he is not the most impressive golfer out here. I don't mean that in a derogatory sense. Quite simply, he is dull by virtue of his own consistency."

"Obviously, the most entertaining golfer in the world today is Greg Norman. He, however, has not achieved what he should have done with his game; Nick has done more than one would have expected him to do with his. Nick isn't flashy; he isn't overpowered."

"Jack Nicklaus wasn't dull because he could drive the ball for ever. But I would say that after the drives there is not much to separate Faldo and Nicklaus. They play the same game."

Hopes riding high on Jacklin junior

By Patricia Davies

THERE is no escape for Warren Jacklin. He may not have to carry the burden of the same Christian name, as Jack Nicklaus, Jun. does, but the surname says it all. Smith or Jones is not. In golfing terms it means a high profile and expectations of something beyond the ordinary, the pressures that would be imposed on a young footballer, a young rugby player, a young tennis player.

Jacklin is only 17 years old, has a handicap of four and was the first of the team in the Millfield three-strong team in the English national final of the Golf Foundation team championship for schools at Robin Hood today. He was to be one of the "lower" handicappers on show, though by no means the lowest. Fraser Watson, of Southend High School for Boys, was off one and Joanne Hookley, the only girl, representing Deben High School, Felixstowe, plays off three.

Jacklin was flying in from Spain to compete during half term, and his father, Tony, hoped the competition would be good for his younger son. "We play a lot and he's tremendously competitive. I can't enjoy it, he loves so hard. I give him his handicap shots but he's young

and says yes, but we'll have a level match as well. But he's never beaten me level and I'll play as hard as I can to stop him doing it."

"What he needs now is to see how good the other lads are. He needs to be beaten a few times by kids of his own age. He's a good lad. He's at the age where you're cocky, but then Peter Alliss keeps saying to me I wonder where he gets that from!"

The young Jacklin has not had a lot of golf this year, but in August he will be going to Jacksonville College in Florida for two years on a golf scholarship. "You know, they pay some and you pay a lot," said his father, who won two Jacklinville Opens in his heyday. "He'll be there for two years, long enough to know if golf or course design is to be his future."

As for Warren's game, Jacklin, sen. gave this assessment: "He's strong and he has no real weaknesses, except I don't like his putting style."

All provided on display today, provided the son's sense of direction is better than the father's. He assumed Robin Hood was in Nottingham. It is, in fact, near Birmingham. In Solihull to be exact. Got that, Warren?

Gallacher tip for Curtis Cup

BERNARD Gallacher, Europe's new Ryder Cup captain, yesterday tipped Great Britain and Ireland's greatest women golfer to retain the Curtis Cup this summer.

After coaching the squad of 14, from which the team will be chosen to take on the United States at Somerset Hills, New Jersey, on July 28 and 29, Gallacher said: "In every way they were comparable with the squad of two years ago from which the winning team was selected for the match at Royal St George's."

Gallacher, who spent three days with the squad in Portugal, added: "The training session gave the girls the opportunity to play sunshine golf and launch their season on a demanding note and in conditions approaching those which might be experienced in America."

"The standard of the girls really impressed me and it is a tribute to the teaching they receive from their own professionals."

Jill Thornhill, the team captain, who played in the last three Curtis Cup matches, is also confident. "I believe we have the makings of a strong team which will do well in America," she said.

CYCLING

Un-sponsored McHugh confident

By Peter Bryson

PETER McHugh, the British double professional track champion, remains hopeful of finding a backer for the season, but not before the opening meeting at Hare Hill tomorrow.

McHugh spent eight weeks training in Australia, earlier this year and should go to the line with a little more edge than his rivals for the international sprint.

Eddie Alexander, a former amateur champion who represented Scotland in the Commonwealth Games in 1986, is among McHugh's opposites with Erik Schoofs and Jerry Detant, respectively, the Belgian and Netherlands title holders.

"The Hare Hill sprint winner last year, Joe Munn, who beat Alexander in the final, retired

from the sport half way through 1989.

Louise Jones, who won the sprint gold medal for Wales at the Commonwealth Games, has been selected for the White Hope sprint, an event normally only open to men.

She won the recent circuit race at Eastway, showing that she has lost none of her speed since returning from Auckland.



Talking ship: The Princess Royal, president of the Royal Yachting Association, speaks with Rod Carr (left), the national coach, and Cliff Norbury, the chairman of the British sailing team, in London yesterday

Haul of Spanish gold within prospect

By Malcolm McKeag

EXPRESSING the belief that "yachting's success in the Olympics is already greater than most people suspect," The Princess Royal, president of the Royal Yachting Association, yesterday welcomed the largest ever package of sponsorship for the British Olympic effort, announced in London by Rod Carr, the national coach.

David Sizer, a managing partner of Richard Ellis, the international property consultants and commercial chartered surveyors, said the company was committed to a three-year, six-figure investment to bring home "a handsome haul of

Spanish gold".

The Richard Ellis sponsorship, the details of which are confidential but which are believed to be around £50,000 annually for three years, is in addition to the funding Olympic yachting receives from the Sports Council and the RYA.

Carr said the first effect of the sponsorship would be to increase by 50 per cent the amount available to "go out the door" to the competitors. Most of the direct grant will go to the Richard Ellis elite squad, qualification for which will be achieved by finishing twelfth or better in a world championship in an Olympic class, or eighth or better in a European

championship.

Britain has five sailors who already qualify: Severine Recce-Jones and Sue Hay, third in the women's 470 world championships in Japan last August; Brian Taylor and Robin Percell, eighth in the men's 470 world championships and Penny Way, third in the IYRU women's windsurfing world championship.

Importantly, Ellis grants will not be continually under threat of review, as are the Sports Council grants, which means that once funded competitors will not have to re-qualify for a grant. A modest performance at a regatta, perhaps through experimenting with equipment,

will not jeopardize their overall status.

In addition to individual funding, the Richard Ellis money will be used to set up winter training camps in Palma in 1990-91 and 1991-92 as winter training in Britain is hampered by the weather.

A full meteorological and hydrographic survey of the waters off Barcelona - where the Olympic sailors will eventually have to race - will be undertaken, along with a detailed and secret programme of technical research into boats, sails and spars to ensure the British sailors go to the Games with equipment at least as good as that of their competitors.

ETON FIVES

Holden bid for tenth title

BRIAN Matthews and John Reynolds, the most successful players in the history of Eton Fives, are poised to compete for their tenth consecutive amateur championship title (a Special Correspondent writes). This year's quarter-final victims, the pair's hundredth in all, were dispatched early last Sunday afternoon on the fives courts of Eton itself, where the game was codified early last century.

Matthews and Reynolds, if successful in Saturday's semi-final, will have to wait until Easter Monday for the championship's climax.

Although hardly the most

common of sports - its enthusiasts are numbered in the hundreds rather than the thousands - Eton Fives is a game of the elite. Sunday's quarter-final opponents were professional athletes, albeit in another sport. Ian Hutchinson and John Carr play or have played cricket for Middlesex, and play fives just for fun.

Both Matthews, a master at Highgate School, in North London, and Reynolds, a journalist, learned the game at the City of London School, a private day school like most of the 30 or so listed in the Eton Fives Association Handbook.

Fives is its most rudimentary

form was invented when peasants found they could not resist bashing a small ball against their local chapel walls.

The 300 or so Eton Fives courts in England replicate one side of the chapel at Eton College. Although slowly in decline in this country, fives has been taken up with a passion in Nigeria, where the game is followed far more seriously than it ever has been here. Last year, Nigerians competed in an amateur championship for the first time. Although they were beaten in the second round, they may soon be a force to reckon with.

ICE HOCKEY

Calgary visit is awarded to Robertson

By Norman de Mesquita

IAIN Robertson, of Fife Flyers, has been named young British player of the year. His prize includes a two-week all-expenses-paid trip to join the Calgary Flames for a fortnight's pre-season training.

The award, in its fifth year, is jointly sponsored by the government of Alberta, Canadian Airlines International and Ice Hockey News Review.

Robertson, aged 20, has been playing ice hockey in his home town of Kirkcaldy since he was 10, graduated to the senior team at the beginning of the 1987-88 season and has represented Great Britain in world and European junior championships during the past four seasons.

The award is the climax after six monthly awards, which Robertson has won twice this season, in December when playing for Ayr Raiders and in March, having in the meantime returned to the Flyers.

He sees the opportunity of going to Canada as a great boost to his career and agrees that those who have won the prize in previous seasons have come back from Calgary better players.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

7.30 unless stated
FOOTBALL
SPRINT LEAGUE: Premier's Cup
Preston v. Wigan (7.30)
SPRINT LEAGUE: First Division
Blackburn v. Oldham (7.30)
SPRINT LEAGUE: Second Division
Sheff Wed v. Walsley (7.30)
SPRINT LEAGUE: Third Division
Sheff Wed v. Walsley (7.30)
SPRINT LEAGUE: Fourth Division
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SPRINT LEAGUE: Fifth Division
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SPRINT LEAGUE: Ninth Division
Sheff Wed v. Walsley (7.30)
SPRINT LEAGUE: Tenth Division
Sheff Wed v. Walsley (7.30)

CRICKET: SKY ONE 3-10.30pm: West Indies v. England, 1st Test (Day 1)
11.30pm-12.15am: Highlights of the first day of the Test
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Without a chance to rest or dream, the tired leading actors move to a new stage for the denouement of one of the most dramatic series in international cricket

The importance of being too earnest

Bridgetown, Barbados

I DO NOT think I have ever felt quite as uncomfortable at a sporting event as I did in the final Test of the fourth Test match in Bridgetown. I have known larger crowds, louder crowds, more hysterical crowds. I have been caught in the crossfire of a beer-glass fight at a football match. That was unpleasant, but it was not disturbing in the same way as the event in Barbados on Tuesday.

The final day of the Test match was a tale of magnificent resistance, magnificently overcome. It was a rich day. Jack Russell's long and heroic boy-on-the-burning-deck performance was a treat. But once he had gone, and West Indies had a hole in the batting to



Simon Barnes

work on, the mood of the match changed.

I saw the West Indian win in Trinidad during England's tour of winter 1986. It was a cheerful, almost a tautological statement of West Indies might. And it was greeted with routine pleasure. But in Barbados this time around, the mood was vastly different. As the wickets began to tumble, and at long last West Indies had a clear sight of victory, the mood of the crowd was certainly not jubilant. It was on the edge of desperation.

The fall of each wicket was

greeted with a glee that bordered on the sadistic. And when the end came, the ground resounded, not with triumph, but with relief. This had been no easy re-statement of West Indian prowess: this had been five days of national angst. But, at last, order had been restored: the sun could rise next morning; the stars had been set back on their courses: God was back in His heaven and all was right with the world once again.

It was understandable, of course, but it was also rather dreadful. Games were never supposed to be this important. The "meadow game" was not designed to carry this kind of weight. But a pleasant, footling pastime has become an expression of national, regional and racial pride.

The unthinkable importance of cricket has been emphasized by the C.M.J. Affair: the furious reaction to the broadcast comments of Christopher Martin-Jenkins of the BBC. He said that the umpire, Lloyd Barker, made an incorrect decision because of the deliberate intimidation by Viv Richards, the West Indian captain.

Martin-Jenkins has been issued with a writ for defamation of the umpire; he has passed this on to the BBC lawyers and makes no comment thereon. He has been the object of fury and the subject of threats he got through his commentary on the final day unscathed, but he looked shattered when he made the plane to Antigua at the end of the

day. He said he was "bearing up". One reaction to all this is to get proprietorial, and to say: "These people don't really understand our game." It is not a very helpful thought. Cricket was unquestionably invented in England, but it has not been static. It has been subject to the forces of history and the influence of people and places and cultures.

Cricket is not an English game any more. It has been subject to the influences of, to name but a few, Islam, Indian politics, Partition, Tamil separatism, Marxist writing, Rastafarianism, the New Zealand Prime Minister, the Bishop of Liverpool, Bob Marley, King Dyal, Benazir Bhutto, aboriginal and Maori rights, George Davis, the

question of trade embargo, the question of diplomatic relations, the sin of adultery, the pleasure of drugs, the morality of money, but also the matter of the importance or otherwise of the rights of mankind to freedom in the face of the forces of oppression.

Cricket is not a simple game. It just started off that way. Cricket was never supposed to be this important, but it is. This makes me profoundly uncomfortable. On the other hand, ask yourself this: How many great West Indians can I name who are not cricketers? Those who can get beyond Bob Marley, V.S. Naipaul and the odd politico are doing better than most.

Put this another way: in

what other areas are the Caribbean people universally acknowledged as the greatest in the world? Nations that lack a long history of war and self-delusion tend to value their sporting triumphs highly.

There is a tang of history in every cricket match between England and West Indies, the ancestors of slaves are playing against a side that represents the land of former slave-makers. Additional irony is added by the presence of three Caribbean-born Englishmen in the England team.

No, neither cricket nor any other silly, jolly ball game was intended to be of overwhelming importance to its practitioners and its audience. But it is now, and there is no point in pretending otherwise.

Wisden's return is friendship renewed

By John Woodcock

LIKE an old friend who comes to stay each April, dressed always in reassuring tweeds, *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack* is published today. The 127th edition of an almanack, it thoughtfully reflects the high standard set by Graham Wright, the present editor.

More manifestly erudite than most of his predecessors, Mr. Wright is, once again, discerning, if sometimes rather heavily didactic. Writing as a New Zealander, he contrasts the English, who are prone to be mistaken for character, and that "when inner reserves are required it is character that sees one through". This, of course, is related to the approach by David Gower to the task of retaining the Ashes last summer compared with that of Allan Border.

Developing the argument along the lines of commitment, through the decision made by so many prominent players to shorten their Test careers by going to South Africa, Wright says: "Watching some of the professional cricketers who have represented England in recent years I can help thinking that they regard a Test match as just another working day." This is a grave charge coming from the editor of *Wisden*, though, perceptively, he suspected things would change under Graham Gooch.

South Africa, in fact, is given a fair hearing. Ali Bacher's speech at last year's *Wisden* dinner being reproduced more or less in full, and Jack Bailey, the former secretary of MCC and now editor of *The Times* cricketer-writing team contributing a definitive résumé, a sure source of future reference, of the ways and wherefores of the agreement regarding the ICC's attitude to South Africa.

The other consuming issue of 1989 — whether or not to introduce a county championship of 16 four-day matches — receives more attention from the editor in his Notes than from Trevor Bailey in a more technical article celebrating the centenary of the official championship. The editor of *Wisden*, Five Cricketers of the Year illustrates the success of Border's Australian side as well as the limitations of the present English game: the only Englishman is Jack Russell, the wicketkeeper.

More reflectively, E.W. Swanton, now in his eighties but still "the voice of authority" writes on batsmen who, over the years, have won the Lawrence Trophy for fast scoring, and David Foster acknowledges Vivian Richards' 100 first-class hundreds.

Foot's is a felicitous style: "Nearly half his (Richards') hundreds were for Somerset, the county he loves no more. When he arrived in 1974 they seemed made for each other. He liked the gentle pace of market-town Taunton, the chummy, rustic, boundary-banter, the apple juice buzz of expectancy as overdrive success loomed..." Last year's Australian tour is carefully and challengingly reviewed by John Thicknesse. It is all good stuff, worthy of a great tradition.

If anything should ever happen to *Wisden*, it would be like losing India. There was a pagan idea not long ago — soon abandoned — that it should be divided into three volumes, one for overseas consumption; and during the brief time that Robert Maxwell published it, he had the cricketers' elders at the annual dinner, as well as a good many who were not so old, grinding their knives and forks in consternation, in a scene worthy of a Bateman cartoon, by suggesting that perhaps the time had come to change the size and shape of the almanack. That was more than enough to see to it that a new publisher was found.

The first issue (1864) cost one shilling and was available, post-free, for 13 penny stamps. Fifty years ago the limp edition was five shillings and the hardback seven shillings and sixpence. Today they are £15.50 and £18.50 respectively.

There is, incidentally, no prouder possessor of a complete run than Geoffrey Boycott, or of something not much short of one than Sir Donald Bradman. What better reading they may have: what blissful self-indulgence.

England's walking wounded face a daunting challenge

From Alan Lee
Cricketer Correspondent
St John's, Antigua

SHORTLY before six o'clock on Tuesday evening, England buckled after a brave fight and lost a Test match. Nine hours later, the players trudged into hotel rooms in a new country, wearily aware that they must start another momentous game the following day.

There was always the possibility, when this arduous tour programme was devised, that one of the two teams would arrive in Antigua on a terminal down. Yesterday, we knew it was England. Cruelly denied an impregnable 2-0 lead in Trinidad a fortnight ago, they have come to the final bell with their legs giving way beneath them and the opposition at their shoulder.

It is impossible not to feel sorry for them. To lose this series now would be a travesty. Sadly, given the psychology of the situation, let alone the hard facts, it is much the likeliest outcome.

In Barbados, for the first time, the old inequalities of cricketing life were stark once more. Individual heroics, from Lamb, Smith, Small and Russell, were not enough to camouflage the shortcomings of a team whose steering and stabilizers had vanished with Gooch and Fraser. West Indies, though not the juggernaut of old, made all the running and won deservedly.

So buckled were the West Indies by these reaffirmed values that they cancelled their seats on the late night flight to Antigua and had a celebration party instead. They flew in yesterday morning, and although injuries which discount Marshall and Moseley, as well as Best, may have had a cautionary effect, the memory of Curtley Ambrose's match-winning spell with the second new ball will quickly restore those

BARBADOS SCOREBOARD

England won toss		WEST INDIES	
First Innings 446 (C A Best 164, I V A Richards 70; G C Small 4-100).		Second Innings 267 for 8 dec (D L Haynes 106; G C Small 4-74).	
ENGLAND		WEST INDIES	
First Innings 358 (A J Lamb 119, R A Smith 62; I R Bishop 4-70).		Second Innings	
	Runs	Wickets	Extras
A J Stewart c Richards b Ambrose	37	-	4
W Larkins c Dujon b Bishop	0	-	12
R Bailey c Dujon b Ambrose	8	-	22
G C Small c Jew b Ambrose	0	-	16
YR C Russell b Ambrose	55	-	30
A J Lamb c Dujon b Moseley	10	-	28
R A Smith not out	4	-	12
N Hussain lbw b Ambrose	10	-	215
N Hussain lbw b Ambrose	0	-	12
J Capel lbw b Ambrose	6	-	1
P A J DeFreitas lbw b Ambrose	0	-	4
D E Molesteri not out	1	-	29
Extras (8 b, 15 w, 1 nb 15)	33	-	-
Total (111.1 overs)	121	-	-

FOOTBALL

Bull's touch sets Wolves on high road for play-off

By Louise Taylor

STEVE Bull may have been accused of being selfish at times, but there is little doubt that the 25 goals struck by the Wolverhampton Wanderers forward this season are largely responsible for the club's flirtation with a play-off place.

Wolverhampton's chances of becoming the first side to advance from fourth to first division in the shortest possible time were enhanced by Tuesday's 5-0 home win against Leicester City - featuring three goals from Bull, which left the Molineux men seventh, one place beneath the play-off zone.

It was Bull's second treble of the season - the other came in a 4-0 win at Newcastle United on New Year's Day - and will not hinder his chances of being included in the England squad for the World Cup finals in June.

Just as Bull and Andy Mutch, his partner in attack, have helped propel Wolverhampton towards the top, Brian Deane, and Tony Adams are similarly accountable for Sheffield United's extended occupation of the division's second automatic promotion position.

Like their counterparts at Wolverhampton, the Sheffield forwards usually forage for their goals by running on to long balls, and two such instances increased their respective tallies at home to Watford on Tuesday night.

Booker and Whitehurst claimed United's other goals in the 4-1 win against Watford, who had threatened to upset the apple-cart by taking an early lead through Pearce.

Sheffield are now three points adrift of Leeds United, who drew 1-1 at Plymouth Argyle, where Chapman scored one and missed several before Tynan equalized from the penalty spot.

Two flashes of international brilliance from Gotsmanov, a Soviet player on loan to Brighton, did the domestic dreams of Osvaldo Artilles serious damage at the County Ground.

Artilles' hopes of winning automatic promotion to the first division with Swindon Town received another setback when Brighton, who had lost their previous nine away games, claimed all three points in a 2-1 win. Bremner and Chivers scored the goals, created by Gotsmanov, while White claimed a consolation for Swindon. But Brighton's joy was muted by the news that Bisset had broken his leg.

Sunderland, who are fifth, and Blackburn Rovers, who are sixth, remain in contention for the play-offs despite defeats at Barnsley and Hull City respectively, but Ipswich Town saw their promotion hopes virtually extinguished with a defeat at home to Portsmouth.



Goal rush: Steve Bull, another hat-trick for Wolverhampton

Welsh prepare for Belgium against Denmark

WALES have arranged an international against Denmark for September 12 in preparation for their European Championship match against Belgium later that month.

The Welsh FA are also considering an offer to play in the United Arab Emirates at the end of the season in June, but acceptance will depend on the financial terms and the availability of players.

Wales have already lined-up friendlies against Sweden (at Stockholm) on April 25, and Costa Rica, who will play at

Ninian Park on May 20.

MILAN (Reuters) - Napoli were awarded a 2-0 win by Italy's football authorities on Wednesday for a league match originally drawn 0-0. The decision came after Napoli leveled on points with AC Milan at the top of the first division.

Napoli had appealed to have their 0-0 draw at Atlanta on Sunday converted into a 2-0 win. A Brazilian international midfielder player Alessandro was hit about an ear by a coin thrown from the crowd 12 minutes before the end.

The Brighton and Hove Albion central defender, Nicky Bisset, faces three months in plaster after having his right leg broken in two places in Tuesday's 2-1 win at Swindon.

Bisset, 26, had his right leg broken in a first half tackle by the forward, Duncan Shearer.

The Brighton physiotherapist, Malcolm Stuart, said: "As far as I am aware, without confirmation, the breaks are clean and, as no plates and pins are necessary, the injury should not threaten Nicky's career."

Harry Redknapp, Bournemouth manager, blamed Matthew Holmes from training before including him in Bournemouth's squad for the trip to West Ham because the midfielder player works too hard.

England's other quarter-final player is Steve Baddley, the former Portsmouth player, who is seeded No. 4.

Two tries from scrums close to England's posts in the first 30 minutes, by Brown, the flanker, and Hogg, the captain and No. 8, set the game's pattern.

When England besieged the opposing line, early in the second-half, they lacked the muscle power, know-how and mental steel to crack a defence which refused to submit.

Scotland's third try belonged to Macrae, the left wing, who took a short pass from Warwood after driving play up an excellent back row.

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